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## THE NEUTRALITY OF CHINA.

Mr. Hay's Note of the 8th of February to the Powers, proposing that they should "guarantee the neutrality and integrity of China," followed so quickly upon the announcement that Japan had broken off relations with Russia, that it scarcely needs saying that it had been at least carefully considered in anticipation of a situation arising which would make such an invitation necessary and politic. The Note was addressed to the belligerent as well as the neutral Powers, and it has elicited their assent, generally speaking, without any reservation so far as written words go. This diplomatic activity on the part of the United States, crowned with gratifying success, has caused considerable heart-searching in Europe, where the intrusion of the great American Republic in International affairs, hitherto controlled by the Old World, is regarded with very much the same suspicion and apprehension that Russia and other Continental States have felt at Japan's assertion of her right to equality with the greatest nations of the globe. Yet Mr. Hay's Note was only the logical and inevitable sequel of the negotiations long in progress between his Government and

China, as well as Russia, for the restoration of Chinese sovereignty in Manchuria, and, with that restoration, the effective putting in force of the open-door policy in that great and important province of the Chinese Empire. The outbreak of the war between Japan and Russia has interrupted those negotiations, and given them a different complexion, but they are not ended, and would certainly be taken up again in the event of a Japanese discomfiture, for the despatch of United States Consuls to the ports of Manchuria after the commencement of hostilities is evidence of the earnestness of the Washington Government.

The move of the American Secretary of State then was not a hasty or isolated proceeding. It forms part of the efforts made for the attainment of a precise and definite object. Japan has appealed to arms, the United States has relied and still relies on diplomatic remedies, but the object with both is the same, viz., the integrity of China, so that all the Treaty Powers may enjoy their equal rights in that Empire. For the integrity of China, to which all the Powers, Russia at the head of them, have repeatedly subscribed, it is neces-

sary, in a time of war waged on part of her territory, to prescribe a state of neutrality, and to see that it is enforced within the limits of practicability, diminished through Russia's own efforts to establish her "unlimited sovereignty" over Manchuria against the treaties and her own repeated promises to the contrary. The battle ground of the contending armies must inevitably be in Manchuria, that is to say on nominally Chinese but practically alienated territory. It would be obviously absurd then for Russia to contend, as some of her unofficial writers are already contending, that the lawless proceedings of the Chunchuses and the generally hostile demeanor of the Chinese population of Manchuria are breaches of China's neutrality. Troubles in Russian-administered Manchuria could not reasonably or even plausibly be evoked as putting in force the Franco-Russian accord of 16th March, 1902, on the ground that they represented "the recurrence of disturbances in China."

The neutrality that the Chinese Government is expected to observe can only be one as effective as its available resources allow of, and no one who regards the situation without prejudice will ever have any real doubt at any period of the contest as to whether the Chinese executive is displaying good faith or not. The limitations of China's capacity to fulfil the duties of her position, which is the curious one of the neutral spectator and, at the same time, the most interested witness and possible victim, are due to Russia's infractions and supersession of the Chinese Emperor's prerogative. Neutrality implies acts of sovereignty, and it is Russia who has shorn Chinese sovereignty of a great deal of its power. Of all the Governments that of Russia is the one which should show China the most consideration and leniency if she displayed some deficiency of power

while revealing the full integrity of her intentions.

What those are have been very clearly set forth by a prominent Chinese diplomatist, the Minister in Paris. His Excellency Sueng has made a statement of which the following is a summary. After the usual disclaimer of any sympathy with either belligerent, both being friendly States, the Minister declares that "our neutrality must be applied to all parts of the Empire except to Manchuria," where, with delicate irony, he adds, "the Russian troops have omitted to evacuate certain districts since the date fixed on in the convention between China and Russia." Still, China, according to him, hopes to meet her obligations, for which she commands a certain amount of resources. Certainly, "she will do all that is possible," and then follows the question, "Can any one ask her to do more than that?" At least Mr. Sueng hopes that the belligerents who have recognized her neutrality will do their best to facilitate the task that lies before her. The question of China's neutrality from the Chinese point of view could not be put with greater clearness or brevity, and the reader may accept this statement as the official case of Peking.

But while the declaration as to China's intentions is clear and encouraging as to the absence of any design on the part of China to throw in her lot with Japan, and to take upon herself the rôle of a belligerent, there is a further declaration of feeling, if not of policy, which shows that, however neutral China may be, she cannot divest herself of interest in a matter which directly affects her existence as an Empire. Mr. Sueng puts this aspect of the question in very much the following words:—"It must not be forgotten, however, that Manchuria, the home of our dynasty, is as much part of the Chinese Empire as any of the

other provinces. Consequently, the fact that it is the scene of the actual hostilities may retard its restoration to us, but cannot in any way diminish our rights of sovereignty, which were set forth in the most unequivocal terms in China's proclamation of neutrality."

With regard to China's intentions there is no reason to doubt what they are, or to question her good faith. If she fulfils the law and the letter of neutrality no one has any right to probe the secrets of her heart. No one would believe her if she swore that her main desire was to see Russia triumphant, and she cannot be blamed for feeling gratification at any misfortunes that may befall the most aggressive of her neighbors. It is not, however, with regard to China's intentions that there is legitimate ground for doubt and anxiety, but rather as to how far the available resources of the central executive will suffice to satisfy external opinion that China is doing "all that is possible" for the vindication of her neutrality. She appeals to the goodwill and forbearance of her friends, the two belligerent Powers, to make allowances for her position, and it does not seem to be to the interest of either to cause her serious embarrassment and thus throw her into the arms of the other, especially during the early stages of the coming struggle. Russia's difficulties are quite serious enough without her wantonly provoking the active hostility of the Chinese population in Manchuria acting in the name and by the authority of the Chinese Government. It is not reasonable to suppose that Russia will add another open enemy to the one already in her path if she can avoid doing so by merely expressing belief in the good intentions of the Chinese Government.

Moreover, the Chinese Government can make a very good display of force in support of its protestations. The foreign drilled army of Yuan-Shi-Kai,

the Viceroy of Pechihli, cannot, after every deduction has been made for exaggeration, now number less than 50,000 men. The lately published official correspondence on Manchuria informs us that when Russia made one of her numerous promises of evacuation, and demanded some guarantee as to the tranquillity of the province after the Russian troops had been withdrawn, China promptly offered to station a garrison of 18,000 regular troops therein. Russia then would not hear of so strong a garrison, and, resorting to what are bluntly called in the United States "Russia's dishonest diplomatic methods," she said the force must not exceed 12,000 men. This little passage shows that it is not a myth when the Chinese Government asserts that it does possess a very considerable armed force, well trained and perfectly amenable to its authority, wherewith it can maintain its neutrality on the borders of Manchuria. The time may come when Russia will represent it to be a grievance that the whole of Manchuria was not neutral territory.

Peking has already furnished tangible proofs of its military readiness by moving considerable bodies of troops to different points along the Great Wall, and by the coast railway from Taku to Shan-hai-kuan. If China's neutrality were bounded by the Great Wall it is not probable that anyone could find the least plausible excuse for alleging that it was ineffective or benevolent to one side more than the other. But the Chinese northern railway projects far beyond the Great Wall to Sin-min-ting, its terminus in one direction, and in the other to Niuchwang by the branch from Kinchau. Both the termini are in exposed positions. They are situated on ground that may well come within the sphere of active operations. More than that, there is every reason to believe that both termini are in the actual possession of the Russians, and

certainly large bodies of Russian troops are in their immediate neighborhood. It is in this region that China's neutrality will be subjected to the most severe strain and to the closest scrutiny and criticism.

China's proclamation of neutrality includes what is called the territory west of the Liaou River, and therefore covers the whole of the system of the North China Railway. But if there is a Russian force at Sin-min-ting that neutrality has been already violated to the advantage of Russia. At Niuchwang the Chinese railway terminus is included within the Russian lines for the defence of that Treaty port. It is possible that Russia may evacuate all the points west of the Liaou before active hostilities occur in their neighborhood, but in her present mood she has shown a disposition to resent the proposal of the Chinese Government to send a large body of troops to the two termini of its own railway system. The presence of 10,000 trained and reliable Chinese troops at Sin-min-ting and also at Niuchwang would seem to be the most efficacious way of maintaining China's neutrality, and China would have acted in this sense before this, but that she was given to understand that Russia would regard such measures as unfriendly acts. The only possible conclusion to be drawn from this attitude is that Russia desires China to continue in a state of weakness and unpreparedness. She is expected to be neutral, but the merit of her neutrality is to be gauged by the absence and not the presence of her soldiers.

Russia forgets that there is the Japanese side of the question. If China is not allowed to make her neutrality effective in the cis-Liaou district it will not be surprising if, when her turn comes, Japan ignores it also, and makes some practical use of the unguarded Chinese railway for a flank attack on

Mukden. And if that state of unprotectedness is clearly due to Russia's own procedure how can she cry out that China has been false to her promises, that her neutrality was a sham, and that some day or other she must pay the penalty?

The explanation of Russia's curious attitude on the subject of China's neutrality is to be found not in the belief that the cis-Liaou region possesses any great military or strategical importance, but in a lively apprehension of a different character, to which no attention has hitherto been called. It is well worth close examination, for it constitutes in all probability what will be the tangible result of the first phase of the land campaign. It is true that this conjecture is based on the assumption that the Japanese will be successful in all the earlier stages of the land campaign, but this is no longer a daring assumption, seeing that Russia's plan of campaign is based on the concentration of her forces on an interior line of defence, or at least a rallying point far removed from any existing responsibility of the Chinese Government.

When Japan has secured the eastern half of the Liaou Valley and the city of Mukden, the following question will arise for consideration. Japan is fighting for this principle—viz., the restoration of the sovereignty of China in Manchuria. As the Russians are driven back, the question will naturally present itself, Why not restore China's authority at the earliest possible opportunity? For instance, if the Russians retire under compulsion, or, in accordance with General Kuropatkin's grand plan, to Kirin and Harbin, what reason is there to prevent the Chinese forces from taking up garrison duty at Mukden? The Chinese Government has never waived a tittle of its sovereign rights. The policy of Great Britain and the United States has been con-



sistently based on their existence. Why should not the Chinese troops proceed to occupy the whole of the Shing-King province as the Russians evacuate it, and if they did, would not the neutrality of the Government cover the territory over which it had reserved its sovereignty even in the official proclamation as to its intended attitude when much of its territory was alienated? If Japan were to act in this manner it would establish her good faith, and the restoration of Manchuria to the custody of China could not but command the sympathy and support of the Governments of this country and America, which would see the realization of their wishes attained in the most effective way. Nor need Japan take the initiative. The Chinese would notify their readiness to garrison Shing-King as they did to the Russians, and the Japanese, fully respecting the Chinese sovereign rights, would say, "Send your troops." That would not be a violation of neutrality. It would be merely an extension of the neutral territory covered by China's first proclamation.

Now the possibility of such an event occurring is greatly increased if Russia, in the beginning of the struggle, acquiesced in the neutrality of the cis-Liaou district, for it would at once bring a large Chinese garrison to Sim-min-ting, only a short distance from Mukden. Russia's impeachment of China's good faith is prompted by the perception of the fact that the more scrupulously China observes her neutrality, and the more completely Japan respects it, the greater must prove its efficacy in the future as a barrier against Russia herself. The neutrality of China is an object that appeals to many countries, and Japanese success in giving it an extended meaning would rather encourage them than otherwise in thinking that it ought to be permanently upheld. It is not hard to see why Russia is already cry-

ing out against the honesty of Chinese neutrality even before any strain has been put upon it, but it is surprising to find both French and German opinion so ready to adopt the same suspicions and to condemn the Chinese Government without even a hearing. It is not merely the neutrality, but all the rights of China that Russia wants to bound by the Great Wall.

The explanation of this attitude of mingled mistrust and apprehension is probably to be found in the coupling of the phrases, "the neutrality" and "the integrity" of China. The objections felt are not so much to the neutrality as to the maintenance of the integrity of China, especially as there is every likelihood of that integrity being restored over regions coveted and in course of acquisition by different European peoples. When, therefore, statements are made that local disturbances in the Chinese provinces signify a general recrudescence of anti-foreign opinion, it will be well to examine closely the particulars of each case, as, for instance, the riot the other day on the Russian railway at Tse-chou-lungan, in Shansi, provoked not by the Chinese, but by the lawless behavior of an Italian engineer, who, either in anger or through fear, took out his revolver and fired on some Chinese workmen. The Chinese Viceroy preserved order throughout the greater part of the Empire during the Boxer rising, and if they were able to restrain the people during that national paroxysm, there is no reason for doubting their ability to prevent any serious outbreak during the course of the far less exciting Russo-Japanese struggle.

Moreover, isolated cases of attack on Europeans, or of damage to the property of Europeans, the risk of which is inseparable from residence in China in times of tranquillity, would not justify a sweeping condemnation of the procedure of her Government. They could

not by any straining of fact be invested with the character of a breach of neutrality, or denounced as signifying that the Chinese meant to throw in their lot with Japan. Yet already the Continental Press is beginning to scoff at the sincerity of the Chinese Government, and to lay hold of the smallest incidents to declare that the yellow races are about to band themselves together not against Russia, but against all the white nations. It is overlooked in this calculation that England is the ally of Japan, and that the United States is unanimously of opinion that Japan is fighting the battle of civilization and progress. A Russian general admitted this fact when he said that "one war will not settle the matter since England and the United States are behind Japan," but it is surprising that Germans, French and other foreigners should so readily endorse the theories that China's neutrality is not genuine, and that a combination of the yellow races against the white races, which include their own Anglo-Saxon allies and supporters, is within the bounds of possibility.

The explanation of these far-fetched arguments must be found in a different line of thought than is suggested by the phrase, "the neutrality of China." It is not the neutrality but "the integrity of China" that arouses apprehension, for the integrity of that country signifies the end of many attractive projects. Here we have the secret revealed. Japanese success must mean the stiffening of Chinese resistance to the constant demands for further concessions of railways, mines and other adventurous undertakings. It will perhaps restore Chinese sovereignty throughout Manchuria, and, if it does, that event must revive the same sovereign rights in other parts of the Empire where railway concessions and leases of land have been given under the clearly expressed reservation of

those rights, of which the lessees have hitherto taken little account. In this limited sense it is quite intelligible that certain peoples, and even Powers, should already regard with unconcealed apprehension the probable effect on the Chinese situation of Japanese success, and their study of the question may lead them to think that the most efficacious way of dealing with it is to disparage the good faith of the Chinese Government, and to render the execution of its neutrality more and more difficult, so that perhaps it may be goaded into action of open co-operation with Japan. But even if this contingency were to arise, it would be impossible to revive the International League of 1900 against the Boxers. England could not join it, and there is no doubt that America, whose sympathy with Japan appears to be more intense than ours, would not. And if no International League in China comes within the bounds of practical politics, how is any extreme action going to be taken to correct the still undiscovered shortcomings in Chinese neutrality, or to avert the consequent enlargement of "the integrity of China" that must ensue from Japanese success.

Taking a reasonable and unprejudiced view of the situation, the neutrality of China during the course of the present war is likely to be just as effective as there is any reason to expect or to require it to be. It is attended by obvious difficulties and limitations, but as they are caused by the previous action of Russia, it is difficult to see what right that Power has to complain about them. The war is being waged in a Chinese province. If Russia had fulfilled any of her numerous promises during the last three years of evacuating Manchuria, there would have been no war. The demand of the Chinese Government to guard its own railway in the cis-Liaou district is not open to dispute as a question of

right. If the Chinese troops have to turn the Russians out of Sin-min-ting it will be a regrettable incident, but at the same time it cannot be denied that it would be a vindication and not a violation of the principle of neutrality. No doubt such a step in the present sensitive state of the political barometer would be represented as an offensive measure, and therefore the Chinese may be prudent in waiting until the course of events in the interior of Manchuria has liberated their territory, without any direct action of their own,

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and thus given them the means of enlarging the operation of their Proclamation of Neutrality. Mr. Hay's diplomacy is entitled to the credit of doing much to secure for the exercise of Chinese neutrality a considerable measure of fair play. Whether his demand for a guarantee of China's "integrity" has commanded sincere acquiescence, or will be realized without some more vigorous measure than the inditing of a circular Note, is a question for the future. It is indeed the problem of the Far East.

Demetrius C. Boulger.

## MEMORIES OF "THE TIMES."

We have hoped in vain for a life of Delane, and we fear we must resign ourselves to disappointment. Yet if the secret history of his eventful editorial career could be told, few political biographies would be more interesting. It could certainly not be swelled by his correspondence. Few men wrote more notes; no man made them shorter or more to the point. Dashed off, *currente calamo*, with a broad-pointed quill, in half a dozen lines or less you had the root of the matter. The sole exception I have seen or heard of was when he was unusually excited over the formation of Disraeli's Ministry in 1874. Then he virtually threw off the leader in a succession of blue paper slips. That brevity was characteristic of the busy man; he had neither time nor inclination to go into details, nor did he care to supply thought and reasoning to his contributors. If they did not answer to a touch of the reins, the sooner they were out of the team the better. I may say I had some short experience of his methods, for he very kindly tried to hitch me up in harness, and failed. Naturally I was flattered

in my ambitions, but regular leader-work was never in my line. I had sorrowfully to explain that my genius would not answer to the sudden crack of the whip; and he remarked, rather regretfully, that the blame was mine if I broke down on the literary threshold, for he had hoped to make me an assured position. There was a temporary coolness, but it was very brief, and I never found a better friend or stauncher backer. During that spell of probation I was living in the country some distance from a station. Twice or thrice in the week, about 11 A.M., the messenger delivered a packet sent by rail, with the paper of the morning weighting an editorial scratch. That scratch gave you all the lead you wanted; the only trouble was to write up to it, on peremptory summons, for the latest available despatch. Often it was labor and sorrow; but that is a personal matter, and it is strange how sometimes toilsome effort will bear the next morning's inspection. You pass from depression to complacency; sometimes, to parody Clive in the Treasury of Moors-hedabad, you sit surprised by your own

brilliancy. There may be more truth than the despondent are ready to admit in Johnson's dictum that a man can always write when he sets himself doggedly to it.

I see now that at that time Delane was testing me. Strong specialties are a great gift of the leader-writer, and he sought to discover whether I had any depth of resources or inclination to any especial line. One morning he would ring up the call bell as to the choice of a bishop; on another the subject to be discussed might be the cricket season or steeple-chasing. As to the latter, by the way, I made an unfortunate slip, by a sarcastic and unjustifiable allusion to the training and social habits of gentlemen riders. Delane printed sundry angry or indignant letters, but never said a word to me. Of course, he made allowances for ignorance and inexperience, and would never have published the articles if they had not pleased him in the main. But on one occasion I nearly came to terrible grief; then it was only sheer accident that got me out of the scrape. On a Saturday he sent me a copy of the newly published Greville Memoirs, telling me to pick out a subject for a Monday's leader. He assumed I had seen the volumes, which I had not, and I was sorely puzzled. However, I went at them tooth and nail, and suffice it to say I pretty nearly achieved the climax of indiscretion. On Sunday night the editor was in villegiatura at Ascot, and a young and inexperienced substitute chanced to be in charge. Most fortunately important news arrived from abroad, and my unlucky leader was shelved. When I next saw the editor he held up his hands in horror, but only exclaimed with admirable good-nature, "Poor So-and-so must certainly have hanged himself if that article of yours had gone in."

His intuitive perception, his sagacious prescience of the tendency of events,

were only paralleled by his prompt decision. A message coming in at the last moment, pregnant with issues in foreign politics or home affairs, never found him unprepared, though the leader, inspired impromptu, committed him inevitably to his course. I remember on one such momentous occasion expressing my wonder and admiration to his brother-in-law Mowbray Morris, for, though taken utterly by surprise, a very few days had justified his action; and Morris said, "It is those flashes of sure intuition that save him; if he were in the habit of hesitating, he would always be blundering." Yet Jupiter sometimes nods, and sometimes when he waited and took thought his sagacity failed him. One notable instance was when he opposed the marriage of the Princess Royal with the Prince of Prussia, though even then he was not altogether mistaken; for the consequences he predicted were in some measure realized in the strained relations of her Imperial Highness with the autocratic Chancellor of Germany.

Like Wellington and all illustrious commanders, he had a contempt for feebleness of moral fibre. The editorship was offered him at the age of twenty-four, and I remember one day, when we were having a quiet talk, asking if it did not shake his courage. "Not a bit of it," he answered. "What I dislike about you young fellows is that you all shrink from responsibility." Nor was there any boastful self-assertion in that, for I have heard the story from his lifelong friend, John Blackwood. The youths were then living together in St. James's Square. One afternoon Delane burst in upon Blackwood, exclaiming, "By G—, John, what do you think has happened? I am editor of the 'Times.'" Immediately he buckled to the arduous task, and from the first Printing House Square recognized a master.

It is not easy for outsiders to esti-

mate the responsibilities he shouldered so lightly. Were I to indulge in clap-trap, I should say he was to wield the bolts of the Thunderer; but, as matter of fact, he inherited the traditions of an immense though occult strength. The "Times" had unseated domineering Ministers, had shaken strong Cabinets, had made Continental Ministers tremble. Under the *régime* of the Citizen King of France, his Foreign Minister had interfered with the transmission of "Times" despatches. Regardless of expense, the "Times" accepted the challenge, and the French Cabinet had the worse in the war. The second Mr. Walter addressed himself to the jealousies of Austria, and a special service of packets was organized, steaming up the Adriatic and superseding necessity for the services of the Messageries. The Frenchmen knuckled down, and the "Times" accepted their conditions of peace. Much had been happening to increase the power of the press. There had been a reduction of the stamp duty and the advertisement tax, the franchise had been lowered, and the circulation of the papers, increasing by leaps and bounds, had awakened the intelligent interest of the masses. Consequently the conductors of the leading journal had become personages to be reckoned with. Greville tells, in his journals, of Lord Durham dropping in upon Barnes to complain of articles which had stung King Leopold and embarrassed the Ministry. *A propos* of communications between the "Times" and the Duke of Wellington, with regard to the revelation of certain Cabinet secrets, Lord Lyndhurst had exclaimed, in an outburst of annoyance, "Why, Barnes is the most powerful man in the country!" In the same year, Peel, the most reserved and austere of statesmen, wrote to thank the editor for "his powerful support." "If I do not offer the expressions of personal gratitude, it is because I feel that

such expressions would do injustice to the character of a support which was given exclusively on the highest and most independent grounds of public principle." And Peel most scrupulously weighed his words, and was never effusive in expressions of gratitude.

Such was the responsibility the youth of twenty-four manfully took over from the veteran versed in intrigues, callous to flattery, and hardened to war. The "Times" editor has abundance of efficient assistance in what may be termed the monotonous driving of the intellectual machinery. His real capacity is tested when he goes into society, as he is bound to do. He must be a ready man of the world, with tact, firmness, and sagacity. It is safe to say that he seldom meets any one of mark who does not desire to get something out of him. He is being interviewed rather than interviewing. He must keep his ears open and his mouth shut—or rather, he should be ready of speech, with a talent for never committing himself. Above all, he must remember that reasoned refusals, conveyed by words or in his columns, command the respect essential to his position. Interested civilities must be fended off by smooth courtesy, as the *suaviter in modo* must temper the *fortiter in re*. The statesmen who showered invitations on the youthful editor found him a modest and genial guest, but a hard nut to crack. They flattered him with free talk and the semblance of confidences, they gave him of the best of their cellars and cuisine; but they came to know that next morning they might be mercilessly attacked and ruthlessly caught tripping. Delane blended the born journalist with the man of the world; the shrewdest of pilots, in calms or extremity, he threaded reefs and shoals with instinctive skill.

Perhaps it is the greatest triumph of ambition—certainly nothing can be



more intoxicating to human vanity—when a man of rare genius or some special talent has raised himself from a relatively modest position to be flattered by the great and courted by the courted. Delane bore his honors quietly, though indeed, with his recognized autocracy, he had little inducement to assert himself. He dressed carefully, though he never sacrificed to the Graces. But the Duke of Devonshire of that day, or the *flamboyant* Count d'Orsay in all his glory, had scarcely drawn more attention in Rotten Row than the unobtrusive rider on the neat black cob. Only it was not with the butterflies of fashion that he exchanged greetings, but with the men and women of light and leading. It was a rare privilege to have his arm up St. James's Street and Piccadilly in the season, when the stream of members was setting off a summer afternoon towards the Houses, and to listen to his amusing commentary of anecdote and political reminiscence, interspersed with graphic sketches of character and careers, suggested by passing personalities. As no one had greater regard for a formidable and intimate political opponent, so no one had less respect for the dilettante aristocrat who had climbed to high place through influential connections. Once, coming back from the Continent, I reported to him some conversations with our Minister at one of the great capitals. I was rather full of them, for the big man's fluency, condensation, and champagne had made a highly favorable impression. Delane listened, and then abruptly changed the subject. "Oh, that old woman. . . . Yes, she is always making love to us, and can be civil when she likes."

In town, he ground industriously and unremittingly at the mill, but he believed in good holidays for himself and other people. His leader-writers were off work on Friday and Saturday, and they had the key of the fields for two

months in the year. I fancy no other newspaper staff had the same indulgence, so a place with the "Times" was doubly enviable. He had no difficulty in assenting to the prescriptions of his close friend and body physician, Sir Richard Quain—bracing air and change of scene. When at work, he anticipated the present-day fashion, and retreated for the week's end to Ascot. Above all things, he delighted in Continental travel; and my old acquaintance, General Eber, ex-insurgent, member of the Hungarian Diet, and "Times" correspondent at Vienna, used to say that in all his experience he never met any one with so versatile an interest in things small and great. Necessarily a late sleeper when in London, abroad Delane would rouse up at abnormal hours, and was never happier than when strolling about the market stalls in some quaint old German city. As I know myself, he had a great partiality for Mayence, where he put up at the "Angleterre," a capital house, looking out on the Rhine, but with a noisy thoroughfare in front and a darksome lane behind. The landlord was his sworn friend, and boasted a vintage of Feurberger, to which Delane directed my special attention. As he grew older, he was less inclined to rove, and when he found himself in congenial quarters he said, with Macmahon in the Mamelon, "J'y suis, j'y reste." He told me once he was off to Scotland for a round of visits. When he came back, I asked how he had passed his time, and he had to own that he went straight to Dunrobin, where he was so comfortable that he never stirred. In Dunrobin he delighted; but on another occasion his sojourn there was brought to an abrupt termination. As I said, he gave his trusted leader-writers a free hand, but sometimes when they held pronounced views on a burning political question, conscience and conviction would make them jib and try a

wild kick over the traces. When the "Times" reached Sutherlandshire one fine morning, the editor was shocked and startled. It was on the eve of the war between Russia and Turkey; the writer strongly sympathized with the Russians, and had gone far towards committing the paper. The lotus-eater roused himself, and hurried to town to put things straight before the error was irretrievable. But he valued a good contributor when he had discovered one, and the delinquent, with a light remonstrance, was turned on to less burning subjects.

I had a rather disagreeable holiday experience with him myself, for when his editorial convenience was concerned he was dictatorial and absolutely autocratic. Being engaged in the literary department, I used to go to him at the end of the session, when, as he would say, the books had a chance. One year I told him as usual when I would like to have my autumnal outing. He said he was short of leader-writers for the time, that he might want occasional assistance in that way, but that the day I named would "suit him down to the ground." Accordingly I laid plans involving those of others, with various serious considerations, and they would have been difficult to alter. I sent a note intimating my departure; it was unanswered; but Delane had left that evening for Scotland, and I fancied I was free. The acting editor sent me off with a God-speed. On my return I called as usual in Serjeants' Inn, looking forward to a pleasant chat, with much cross-questioning. The courteous and confidential servant who guarded the door went in as usual to announce me, but came back with a look I understood—we were excellent friends—and said, "Mr. Delane regrets that he is engaged." A nod is as good as a wink on some occasions, and I understood all about it. For three

months in the busy season of the books I heard nothing from Printing House Square. At the end of the months our relations were resumed as if nothing had happened, but it was a broad hint which was not to be disregarded.

Those days, when the rush of autumn books had set in, were golden for the reviewer—and the publisher. Macdonald had not yet patented and introduced the "Walter" machines, which left each column of the paper open till the eleventh hour. The outer sheet was leisurely printed in the course of the day. One season the work was carried on in a South Kensington Exhibition, and some relations were amused to see an article of mine, with its unmistakable cecography, in process of translation. Then the reviewer had *carte blanche* and ample elbow-room. To quote Major Dalgetty, simple as I write now, I saw two full columns devoted to my maiden novel: George Smith, who published it, remarked that if such a review had appeared ten years before, he would have immediately ordered another edition (*i. e.* a thousand). But he did not. The great parcels of books then consigned to the reviewer were golden veins. I remember the luxurious length at which one expatiated on "Dukes of Burgundy," or the Duc d'Aumale's "Princes of Condé." George Elliot's suggestive *Life*, though of moderate bulk, ran to two or three articles. There were three elaborate articles on Lord Campbell's volume on Brougham and Lyndhurst. But with important political memoirs the editor took special trouble. On one such occasion the writer dined in Serjeants' Inn to meet Alfred Montgomery and George Venables, and sat modestly listening with open ears, while with story and reminiscence they threshed out the subject in all possible aspects. Delane was likewise much of a listener, but displayed his inimitable adroitness in

drawing. In lighter works by some statesman or man of eminence, such as "Lothair," he showed the same keenness of interest. And on anything of veritable magnitude or importance how meticulous he used to be! Soon after my acceptance as an outsider on the staff, he sent me Gladstone's "Chapter of Autobiography." Naturally I bestowed no little pains on the two columns, and after the article had been despatched, a thought having struck me, I sent a correction. The article duly appeared next morning, but the answer I got was Delane's revised proof, and the number of the trifling alterations was innumerable. For himself, he wrote seldom, and added or interpolated little, but he had a marvellous turn for the final polish or the finishing touch. On an anniversary of Sedan—I had been in Rhineland on the occasion—he wrote to say he had a grand subject for me. I wrote something which chanced to please him, but I knew that all the effect was in the climax—in the single sentence he had added by way of epilogue. He was wonderfully appreciative of quick response to a sudden call. Sometimes a fashion or a craze of the day gave exceptional consequence to a flowing piece of ephemeral scribbling. One morning, when he knew I was coming to town, I found at the Athenæum a copy of the "Shah's Diary," with a request for a long article. It was easy work when the book was skimmed, with copious extracts. I threw off four columns. To my disappointment, the review demanded in hot haste did not appear next day, and I deemed it had been a case of more haste, worse speed! It had only been held over owing to unexpected pressure; yet there were two spare columns in place of four, and Delane, knowing there had been a prompt answer to the spur, filled them with a second article on Felix Whitehurst's book on Imperial Paris.

As it chanced, in good-natured haste, Jupiter had again been caught nodding; the first article on the volumes had been overlooked.

The "Times" editor needs nerve and placidity above everything. He should have the faculty of blissful oblivion—of never being sorry to-day for anything done yesterday. There was a memorable occasion when the Emperor Napoleon lay dying. Delane sent four printed columns of the biography, written several years before, to be leisurely completed at length, for there seemed to be no immediate danger. The contributor acted strictly on his inspiration, and took his time in looking up the memorable events of a pregnant dozen of years. One day he had gone out shooting, and came home rather fagged, to find the editor's *fidus Achates* in waiting. There had been a sudden end, and the memoir was due next morning. There is nothing like an emergency for bringing the journalist up to time, and the sense of the wagon on your heels is a wonderful stimulant to the faculties. Fortunately, that contributor had facts at his finger-ends. At 8.30 P.M. he was seated in Printing House Square, scribbling viciously, with perpetual interruptions from boys bringing up strips of "copy" to be promptly revised. At 10.30 Delane strolled in, in evening dress—he had been dining with the Duke of Cambridge at Gloucester House. His only remark was, "Ah, you had done nothing to those four columns—I hoped never to see them again," and he walked out. Anxious he might have been, but he knew too well to flurry an excited man. The article was run off, *tant bien que mal*: the weary writer stretched his legs in a walk to a bed at the Tavistock—a line inviting him to supper and bed in Serjeants' Inn had miscarried—and an immense relief it was next morning to see at the breakfast table the consummation of his labors served

up with the eggs and the muffins. Another obituary memoir in which Delane took intense personal interest, and for which he supplied much interesting information, was that of Lord Beaconsfield. Though their political opinions clashed, they had a high regard for each other, and I had a letter in my possession in which his Lordship spoke warmly of their cordial relations, when thanking him for a favorable review of "Lothair." Nothing pleased him more than the dashing off a rapid review of all the works of some popular writer, whose death had been somewhat unexpected. Lever and Lord Lytton were instances. The day after Lord Lytton's demise there was a dinner of the Geographical Society, and Delane was sitting next to Lord Houghton. Houghton expressed surprise at the intimacy with details shown in an article of the morning, and Delane looked much gratified, the fact being that the writer had read and re-read till he knew the favorite novels nearly by heart. Sometimes these articles written against time had the writer's revision in proof, though more often they had not. The editor, with his broad views, could give microscopic attention to details, which was no specialty of mine. Naturally, carelessness and slips annoyed him, and I remember his writing on one review, "You will never make your fortune as printers' reader," a prediction which, as Boswell said of Johnson's prognostication as to the consequences of Mrs. Boswell's death, has been too sadly verified.

Worn out by arduous and incessant work, with advancing years his health gradually broke down. Sir Richard Quain, always keenly interested in literary and journalistic matters, and eager to help any literary man, did all that could be done to prolong a valuable life. But retirement became inevitable, though doubtless retirement, with the loss of stimulus it brought, accelerated

collapse. For at least a year or two, his regular attendance at the office had been merely perfunctory; the work had really been conducted by Mr. Stebbing, who steered so admirably that no one, not in the secret, surmised that the pilot had been virtually superseded. Delane still dropped in frequently of an afternoon at the Athenæum; he used always to say that he did not know what a man wanted with more than a single club, when he had the *entrée* to such a society. Then came the eclipse, and the disappearance from the circles he had charmed and adorned.

There was much wild speculation as to his successor. More than one member of the "Times" staff was named in the running, and gossip asserted with great confidence that the mantle of Elijah was to light on the shoulders of an eminent Government official. So far as I know, no one named the winner till the decision was announced, and it came as a surprise. One evening, when dining with Mr. Stebbing, I made the acquaintance of Mr. Chenery, Professor of Arabic at Oxford, and one of Delane's most valued leader-writers. That evening began a friendship, prematurely ended to my bitter regret. We walked together from Russell Square to Oxford Circus, and stood talking for some time under the lamps before we shook hands. As Chenery told me afterwards, that evening he "had his commission in his pocket." In many respects he was admirably equipped. A fluent linguist, he was thoroughly versed in Continental politics, and had discussed them in innumerable articles. He had a wide literary and scientific connection, he laid himself out to secure the assistance of specialists, and, as he remarked complacently a couple of years later, he might pride himself on the number of his distinguished contributors. The marked increase of advertisements, as he said, was a proof that the paper was

flourishing. But he had taken to the leadership too late in life, and the burden of daily worry weighed upon him. The most agreeable of companions in a quiet way, he had not Delane's social versatility. The editor of the "Times" is bound to entertain, and no man was more naturally hospitable. He delighted in dinner-giving, and at his house in Norfolk Crescent, and afterwards in Serjeants' Inn, you were always sure to find yourself in elevating company, though, like Delane, the host listened rather than led the talk. There were statesmen, politicians, travellers, and men of letters; there were cultured soldiers who have since made themselves famous, and officials of the Foreign and Colonial offices, who have become ambassadors, Ministers, and satraps of provinces. Chenery could pick and choose. But though that part of his editorial duties was the reverse of disagreeable, he was never more happily in his element than when dining at the table in the north-east corner of the Athenæum *salle-à-manger*, with his habitual cronies reinforced by casual arrivals. Hayward, who in his later years seldom cared to dress and dine out, and Kinglake, who as yet had scarcely been afflicted by deafness, were regular members of the little party, and it was no ordinary privilege to join it. There Forster would be induced to relate some of his anxious experiences as Irish Secretary, when he narrowly escaped the fate which befell Lord Frederick Cavendish. There was Lord Monk and another brilliant Irishman, Sir William Gregory, who had made his début in politics by facing O'Connell on the Dublin hustings, and who had won the blue ribbon of the Colonial Office as Governor of Ceylon. It was in that corner Sir Robert Morier commented one evening on the penny-wise folly of the Foreign Office in refusing to sanction his arrangement with the Portuguese Ministry for the pur-

chase of Lorenzo Marques for some 30,000*l.* We had cause to remember his words of wisdom when we went to war with the Boers. Hayward, by the way, though a close friend of Chenery's, never quite forgave him for the independent line he took. "I thought we could count upon him," he once complained. "I introduced him to Lady Waldegrave, and now—" Chenery, who cared nothing for the fashionable world, was not the man to be seduced by the songs of the sirens. And *à propos* of his friendly relations with travellers, one memorable evening I recall at the Athenæum. I was privileged to make a third with Chenery and Palmer. I think it was the very day before that great Orientalist started on his disastrous Arabian expedition. I can see Palmer now, stroking his long beard, explaining his hopes and discussing his fair prospects. The old friends parted, in undemonstrative English fashion, with a warm handshake; a few weeks later Palmer met his dramatic death at the hands of Arab fanatics.

Chenery, like Delane, was fond of touring, and loved to take his holidays abroad. He sought out objects of historical interest, but could amuse himself well with the *dolce far niente* when nothing more exciting was to be had. He was a *bon vivant*, and appreciated the French cuisine. I was residing one spring at the Hôtel Brighton, at Boulogne, when I was agreeably surprised by an early call. He had crossed by the night packet, and was putting up at the "Bains." The *chef* of the "Brighton" was an artist, and Chenery appreciated my invariable breakfast of a sole fresh from the Channel, with a squeeze of lemon, and an *omelette aux anchois*. When he broached the object with which he had dropped in on me, he was somewhat disappointed, for, much as I should have liked it, I could not accompany him on a visit



to the fields of Crecy and Agincourt. But he resigned himself, and for two days was perfectly happy in lounging on the pier and strolling about the environs.

He ought to have been his own correspondent in Paris, and, had it been so, his days would have been prolonged. A Barbadian by birth, he was a genuine Parisian, and life on the boulevards was genuine luxury to him. But his interests were various as his amusements. He was as much in his element overhauling the bookstalls on the Pont Neuf, or inspecting Arabic manuscripts at the National Library, as when breakfasting at Brebant's, dining at Philipps's, or laughing in the stalls at a blood-and-thunder melodrama at the Porte St. Martin. For, on the whole, he preferred sensations or the humors of the Bouffes to the æsthetic art of the Français.

When a day was specially fine he would go for excursions. One of the pleasantest was to St. Germain, where on the terrace, with its outlook on the forest, and over dinner in the Pavillon de Henri Quatre, he waxed eloquent on the memories of the Valois wars and the shadowy Court of the exiled Stuarts. But, unlike Delane and Mowbray Morris, he could never leave his paper behind him. Morris used to say that nothing disgusted him more than seeing an assiduous waiter lay the newly-arrived "Times" on his breakfast-table. Chenery tore it open eagerly, and smiled or frowned as the case might be. The morning of a happy day at Fontainebleau was overclouded by something absolutely trivial as to a pork ring at Chicago, which could have affected no living soul except speculators immediately concerned. But the clouds passed with a drive in the forest, and Richard was himself again when we were being promenaded through the palace, viewing the scenes of Monaldeschi's assassination and the

great Emperor's mournful *adieux* to his veterans.

We saw a great deal of Blowitz. I had met him first when he was acting aide-de-camp to Laurance Oliphant, in Oliphant's *appartement* in the Champs Elysées. He was then attending the Assembly at Versailles, while his chief was hunting Paris for news. Oliphant was delighted with his latest treasure-trove, congratulating himself on having given a born journalist a lift on the journalistic ladder. He said that Blowitz not only stenographed speeches on his memory, but acted the speakers to the life. His humorous version of Blowitz's being enrolled in the Legion of Honor was that he won the ribbon by shooting a woman. Blowitz, in his memoirs, takes himself more seriously, and ignores the incident, if it ever occurred. Oliphant said that Blowitz was walking with the Government troops, whom he had really brought into Marseilles for the suppression of the Commune. At a critical moment, when they were near fraternizing with the rabble, he saved the situation by firing his revolver at random into the crowd. His principles may have been subordinated to his professional ambitions, but he was in strong sympathy with the Republican *régime* when he succeeded Hardman as regular "Times" correspondent, and assuredly no journalist had a keener *flair* or exerted greater political influence. He makes no idle boast when he says that he saved France from a second and more disastrous invasion. His friend, Frederick Marshal, wrote me in 1878—he and Blowitz used to meet every day—that they never went out for a morning stroll without seeing the Prussians passing again in triumph under Bonaparte's triumphal arch. So he was stirred to take action in the interests of peace. I had personal proofs of the weight he carried with the French au-

thorities. Talking to him, I mentioned casually that an English governess, in whom my family was interested, had married a French revenue officer, and was bored to death with their dull quarters on the frontier of Lorraine. A few weeks afterwards that officer was transferred to a lucrative post at Lisle. I told Blowitz, as a strange illustration of discontent, that the lady was no happier at Lisle, where she objected to the murky atmosphere. Whether it were by way of showing his strength I cannot say, but the lady was promptly removed to the sunnier clime of the Gironde. In later years the *levée* in his little antechamber was crowded, though he was then extremely difficult of access to outsiders. He liked to let his busy brain have rest, or was wrapped in the pregnant meditations which flowed fast from his ready pen. Hurrying through Paris with a commission to write some letters from the Riviera, I called to ask him for introductions to Nice. He grasped my hand, said he was too hard at work thinking to talk, and scribbled off two lines on a couple of cards for the Préfet and the British Consul. From both the dignitaries I had a welcome and all the information I could desire. Great was his pride in the first and only journal. His dinner hour coincided with the "Times" delivery, and one evening after dining *tête-à-tête* we adjourned for coffee to his den. He opened the paper eagerly, as if he had never seen it since Oliphant showed it to him for the first time when offering an engagement on it. He spread it on the table, saw two columns of his telegraphic letter, clasped his hands, threw up his eyes, and ejaculated, "Isn't it beautiful?"

When I was putting up with Chenery at the "Louvre," Blowitz would come to breakfast full of political and social gossip, and of his plans and schemes for the day. Like the diplomatist who

told the Royal Commission that the first qualification for diplomacy was having a first-rate *chef*, he knew the value of a good table, and gave capital little dinners himself. For he preferred a small party where the talk could be general, and liked to have one notable man to take the lead. Once we deferred our departure, that Chenery might make acquaintance with M. de Freycinet, who was then directing the foreign policy of France; and the most agreeable of these bright evenings was when the only other guest was an Austrian Colonel, who came with a case of the most fragrant Havanas, who told with dramatic realism the story of the *triste noche* when he commanded Bazaine's rearguard on a more melancholy retreat than that of Cortez, and who was doomed to dishonor and the military disgrace which cut short a career of brilliant promise.

So that of Chenery ended prematurely, though under very different circumstances. The truth was, and reluctantly he had begun to realize it, that he had taken too heavy a burden on his broad shoulders. He was not cut out for that exceptional routine of incessant work and worry. When overstrained, trivialities got on his nerves and aggravated the trouble. Attacked by a painful internal disease, his pluck was great; for long he kept his secret, bearing up manfully, and going with an air of unruffled serenity about his ordinary business. Constitutionally secretive, it was characteristic that when he went to consult the family physician of his friend, James Payn, he revealed neither his name nor occupation. Very soon he was compelled to summon the doctor to his house; but even after, as I believe, it was intimated to him that he was virtually condemned, he rose from his couch to return to the office, concealing his griefs with Spartan fortitude. The effort may have been too much for him, for -

there was immediate collapse. Confined to his bed, his patience was admirable. He would still converse cheerfully on topics of the day, and on one of his last afternoons he sent a friend on a mission to get him a favorite brand of cigarettes. I had not a suspicion that the end was so near, nor even that it was certain. A surgeon was called to consultation with

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the doctor, and one evening they decided on an operation. It seemed successful, and I was assured there was no danger for the night. I looked my last on him, and went to my rooms in Jermyn Street. Next morning while dressing, the "Times" messenger came to say that he had departed peacefully a few hours before.

*Alexander Innes Shand.*

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### OF THE TRUE GREATNESS OF THACKERAY.

Notwithstanding the name and fame achieved by Thackeray, there is, perhaps, no eminent English writer concerning whose work there is so much misapprehension, such a deficiency of really sound and well-balanced appreciation. While he was a much greater genius than his countrymen have generally recognized, he is weighted with mistakes and defects from which many writers of less calibre are free; but neither to him nor against him has adequate justice been done; neither his admirers nor his detractors speak as those who can render a reason. Of his real shortcomings, not unimportant in a literary sense, general readers are apparently little conscious, or they might make a better case against him than they are aware of. On the other hand, the school of critics who judge of a work of fiction entirely from the standpoint of literary workmanship, and shudder at every sentence that is not a study in finish of expression, have of late been busily nibbling at Thackeray's literary deficiencies—his often slipshod style, and his exaggerations in detail, both of conception and of diction; as if the elaboration of such charges were in itself sufficient to hand him down to a rank below that of the

stylist school of novelists, the weavers of carefully adjusted sentences, and delicately insinuated shades of meaning, and to brand him as a mere bungler, in both a literary and philosophical sense, by the side of Mr. George Meredith.

There must be something very much out of gear with a school of criticism which arrives at such a result. It is surely germane to the matter to put the question—What is the real object of fiction of the higher order? Mere story telling, invented to pleasantly excite the curiosity during an idle hour, we may leave out of consideration; it may be well or ill done, and when well done it is an addition to the innocent pleasures of life, and one which we cannot afford to lose; but it is not literature. Fiction in the higher sense has surely for its main end the same which Shakespeare claimed for drama—"to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure." The novel, in this sense, is drama played out in an extended form, free of the limitations of time and place imposed by the conditions of acted drama; and affording the opportunity for the author, if so minded, to act as "chorus"

from time to time—as commentator on the situation. This personal intrusion of the author, however, though allowable in a sense in which it is not allowable in drama (save of the Greek type), is *pro tanto* an artistic defect, only to be condoned in consideration of the importance of the moral object in view. Jane Austen's novels exhibit dramatic fiction in its purest and most unadulterated form; they are extended drawing-room comedies, played out with the most perfect realism and consistency on the part of all the characters, and absolutely free from any didactic element, or any intrusion of the author. It is easier, however, to maintain this impersonal treatment in fiction of the drawing-room comedy type, than in that which deals with the deeper springs of human passion and human action. Here, no doubt, it may be difficult for a writer who feels his subject strongly to refrain from stepping forward to point the moral of the ruin of a character, or the failure of a career; he may feel, like the apostle, that "necessity is laid upon me, yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not;" and, in fact, no serious writer of fiction in our language, dealing with life as it is lived, has been able to resist entirely the didactic temptation. In spite of Fielding's many indecorums of language and incident, the moralizing element is almost as prominent in "Tom Jones," as it is in "Vanity Fair" and "Pendennis." Nor can one blame any serious novelist or dramatist for having a moral aim in his mind in writing (will any one maintain that "Lear," "Hamlet," and "Macbeth" have no moral aim?); it is the intrusion of it in didactic form which is the infirmity of noble minds. Thackeray himself seems to have felt this in regard to his most abstract and impersonal production, "Barry Lyndon," in which he at first inserted certain comments on, or apologies for, the turpitude of the autobiographer, which

were cancelled in later editions. Indeed, the artistic mistake of openly moralizing could hardly be better illustrated than in the original foot-note to the passage where Barry Lyndon defends his conduct in his married life:—

I am a man full of errors certainly, but not the devil that these odious backbiters at Tiptoff represented me to be. For the first three years I never struck my wife, but when I was in liquor. When I flung the carving knife at Bullingdon I was drunk, as everybody present can testify.

To append an apologetic note to this, in the author's own person, to the effect that—

If the crude way in which some of these matters are discussed should offend some delicate readers of the present day, let them remember this is an authentic description of a bygone state of society, &c., &c.

was a deplorable mistake, as Thackeray evidently perceived on further consideration, when, with equal, though belated, judgment, he also withdrew the introductory paragraph to Chapter I. of Part II., and the moral summary at the close of the book.

A legitimate variation from the theory of the novel as extended drama is afforded by the historical novel, in which the aim is to interweave a picture of actual historical events with the portrayal of original characters, who are supposed to take part in them, or sometimes with the attempt to revive actual historical characters whose personality has somewhat faded from view; to make the dry bones of history live. Of this kind of reconstruction of a historical character through the medium of fiction, Thackeray has given a remarkable example in his portrait of Marlborough, in "Esmond," and Scott, in his splendid and chivalrous figure of Claverhouse in "Old Mortality." Prob-

ably the one portrait is somewhat less than fair to Marlborough, the other somewhat more than fair to Claverhouse; but there is no doubt that the two novelists have given us, respectively, a more vivid and real conception of these two figures in history than we should have had otherwise. In the historical novel, however, whether introducing historical or fictitious characters, the tendency is (especially where the historic events portrayed are of great and important significance) for the novel to lose its dramatic character and become epic; the more the historic interest of the events predominates, the more individual character becomes merged in it.

The historical novel, despite some recent lumbering attempts, is out of favor now; but not less so, apparently, is the genuine novel of human character and manners. Of the novels of recent date which are written with more or less serious purport, and which take (apparently) the taste of one class or another of serious readers, we may recognize three types, all more or less conventional, and which may be classified as the "Repartee" novel, the "Conundrum" novel, and the "Cameo" novel. In the Repartee novel, which is at the height of its popularity at present, all the characters, high and low, rich and poor, one with another, seem to exist only for the sake of saying smart things, culled from the author's memorandum book of witty sayings. This absurdity has invaded the stage also; for what are the popular comedies of the day but medleys of smart dialogue, for the sake of which any dramatic action which there might have been is arrested, and the acting company set down to a game of cross-questions and crooked answers. Such plays and nov-

els are not only not human nature, they are not even human manners, nor are they, one may suppose, taken as such by any but addle-pates. But our second type, the Conundrum novel, is a more formidable bugbear, since it is practised by writers of great talent, and admired by readers of serious intent. Here the object seems to be to bewitch the reader's perceptions by a *curiosa felicitas* (or *infelicitas*) of literary style, employed in twisting and untwisting the motives of a series of conventional types of human tendencies, neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding from the convolutions of the author's brain, and speaking a dialect of involved sentences and puzzle replies, such as no people in their senses ever spoke in common converse, unless they were the most quintessential prigs ever born;<sup>1</sup> in which human personality is completely lost amid a web of far-fetched diction, so that we seem to see, not flesh-and-blood personages, but bloodless beings who are mere counters in a game of speculation; pils round which the plies of the author's humor may be twisted; or (shall we say?) pawns pushed backwards and forwards over a chequer-work of intricately expressed cogitations. Where the imagined conflict of passions in these puppet creations is concerned with issues such as in real life would be of vital and momentous importance, there is, at all events, some dignity and seriousness in this study of symbols of character, and their possible influence on each other; they acquire the same kind of importance as algebraical symbols which represent large quantities. But when all this word-play is expended over mere trumpery problems of social misunderstanding, one can only feel irritated at the disproportion between

<sup>1</sup> As an example of the inability of these puppets to give a plain answer even to the simplest question, a lady asks another: "You are often in the world—dinners, dances?" she said. "Peo-

ple are kind," "is the reply. She could not have said "yes" for the world. Does any one in real life talk in that fashion?



the elaboration of the mechanism and the futility of the result.

What we have called the "Cameo" novel may, unfortunately, partake of the characteristics of the Conundrum novel; but in its pure form, as displayed in the works of Mr. Howells, and in the earlier short stories of Mr. Henry James, before he had come under the influence (as to style) of Mr. Meredith, the Cameo novel is a refined and highly-finished study of an episode (generally) in the life of a man or woman, or of both conjointly, finishing off abruptly at the close of the episode; an effect invented by Mr. James, and which has received the compliment of much imitation. Some of these studies, by both the writers just named, are little masterpieces of concentrated artistic and literary finish, and in the case of Mr. James one can only regret that he no longer writes in the pure and clear, if a little too *précieux* style, which he had made his own in works of this class, which Mr. Howells still retains, and in which both have had some not unsuccessful imitators.

It is to this tendency in recent fiction to regard artistic execution as the supreme end, to place manner above matter, to prefer delicate insinuation of shades of character to a frank and bold portrayal of human nature in its broader aspects, that we may attribute the present inclination, especially among American critics, to belittle Thackeray, as a writer characterized by artistic coarseness and exaggeration. The feeling of the day is amusingly exhibited in the critical extracts placed by publishers on the catch-penny fly-leaves of their books. The two following are typical enough: they refer to two of Mr. James's stories:—

There is a fine finish about all his work; no signs of hurry or carelessness disfigure the most insignificant paragraph.

What strikes one, in fact, in every

corner of Mr. James's work, is his inordinate cleverness.

"Inordinate" is good; indeed, we will adopt it. It is a fault which Thackeray certainly cannot be accused of, any more than we could praise him for showing "no signs of hurry or carelessness" in his work. On the contrary, there is no great writer in our language, except Shakespeare, who shows so many. Like Shakespeare, he sometimes does not even trouble himself to write grammar:—

In our journey westward my Lady Lyndon chose to quarrel with me because I pulled out a pipe of tobacco (the habit of smoking which I had acquired in Germany when a soldier in Bülow's, and could never give it over).

Is this Mr. Lyndon's own grammar? The explanation is rather far-fetched. Thackeray owned to having killed Lord Farintosh's mother in one chapter, and revived her in another. The explanation of Laura and her position in the Pendennis household only comes in as an obvious afterthought. In the description of the performance of "The Stranger" by Bingley's Company, we read "Enter Tobias (Goll) from the hut." Who was "Goll"? Evidently in the author's mind he was a member of the *troupe*, but the reader is told nothing more about him. Lyndon refers in the later part of his memoirs to meeting Dr. Johnson, as if for the first time, the author himself having apparently totally forgotten the admirable little episode of their first meeting, in the earlier pages of the book. In the first edition of "Esmond" "the French advanced in twelve lines, four of foot and four of horse" (this seems to have been noticed and corrected in later editions). Barry Lyndon reverses the usual manner of stating a horse's pedigree—"my horse Bay Bülow, by Sophie Hardcastle out of Eclipse"; a mistake which so

horse a gentleman as Mr. Lyndon would certainly never have made. In his curious and almost ostentatious ignorance about music, Thackeray is kept in countenance by Jane Austen; that mysterious and unknown composition, "Beethoven's dream of St. Jerome," referred to repeatedly in "Phillip," may be paired off with the "second, slightly but correctly taken by Frank Churchill," as an addition to Emma Woodhouse's song. The description of Miss Wirt's variations on "Sich a getting upstairs" is a fair enough satire on one kind of pianoforte playing; but Thackeray would have written just the same had it been Beethoven's "Thirty-three" (could Miss Wirt have played them). This kind of ignorance may be regarded as an ordinary John Bull characteristic; but it is certainly odd that an author who rather prided himself on his familiarity with French should have dropped into such a commonplace error as writing *à l'outrance* for *à outrance*; a blunder for which a reviewer of the present day would have come down heavily on him.

✓ The true explanation of this curious carelessness seems to be, that Thackeray, in his method of writing, was essentially a magnificent *improvisatore*, with an inexhaustible fund of observation of, and comment on, life and character; he sees the whole spectacle going on before him, and at any particular moment he is occupied with the action of the moment, rather than with questions of style or of the proportion of the whole. In nothing is this improvising quality more remarkably illustrated than in his extraordinary alertness and vitality over every little side-scene and side-character in the human comedy. In his three great novels of modern life, there are no dead corners anywhere; no dummies. He cannot give Rawdon and Macmurdo their breakfast in the mess-room, after the serious colloquy concerning Lord

Steyne, without throwing in a sketch of the young fellows there, and "that violent little devil Tandyman," and his indignation about the result of the fight between the Butcher and the Pet; he cannot refer to Miss Quigley's little passage of courtesies with Colonel Newcome without throwing in a passing picture of the poor governess in her own room, high up in that lone house, with "her little desk containing her mother's letters and her mementoes of home"; and in the scenes in the "Back Kitchen," or "The Haunt" (apparently two names for the same place), we seem to hear Tom Sarjent talking in blank verse. Archie rattling off his unblushing inventions, or Warrington's voice as he lazily winds up his lecture on sobriety and honest living with "*Video meliora proboque*—I mean, bring it me hot with sugar, John"; humors of characterization which, it must be admitted, have no more to do with the story than the chaff between Falstaff and the Prince and Poins has to do with the plot of "Henry IV."

This exuberance of vitality was undoubtedly a dangerous gift in a sense; it betrayed him into ebullitions of high spirits which furnish some foundation for the charge brought against him by the stylists of the Conundrum and Cameo schools—of exaggeration, and laying on his coloring too thick. That this charge is not without excuse must be admitted, but there are one or two considerations in palliation of it, which seem to have been overlooked by his critics. In the first place, the early habit of writing for ~~Punch and other~~ professedly light periodicals seems to have left its influence on Thackeray for long afterwards, in the shape of an inability to refrain from rather superficial jokes and puns. "If you are not drowned in a *pozzo-profondo*," writes Lady Kew to her grandson, who had been driving about Brighton openly with M<sup>me</sup>. Pozzo-Profondo, the cele-

brated contralto; the author forgetting, in his love of a joke, that the signification of such explanatory names, whether in fiction or in drama, is only supposed to be known to the spectators, not to the actors themselves.<sup>2</sup> When old Saint-Jean tells Clive that Madame la Comtesse will be home to the dinner of M. Le Comte, "as to the ordinary," one does not at once realize that this odd phrase is a literal translation of *comme à l'ordinaire*. Was the joke worth making? A picture exhibition critique by Fred Bayham would, in any case, have been amusing, but it would hardly have been in the vein of that in Chapter XXII. of "The Newcomes," which reads far too like an extract from *Punch*. Thackeray's own almost boyish simplicity of character and readiness to be amused had something to do with this; but his early "pot-boiling" writings for light periodicals probably left their influence behind. On the other hand, in criticizing some of Thackeray's coarser portraits, people forget that he is now half a century behind us. Fred Bayham, for instance, would not be discoverable in the London world of to-day, but, I have no doubt he existed in Thackeray's time. The writer of a very wrongheaded article on Thackeray in the *Edinburgh Review*, some three or four years since—an article little worthy of the best literary traditions of that review<sup>3</sup>—quoted the reception Hobson Newcome's footman gave to Clive and the Colonel when they called (Chapter VII. of "The Newcomes"), and asked triumphantly "which of our friends has a servant with such manners?" He forgot that they were not the sort of people we count among "our friends"; the Hobson Newcomes were

vulgar people with money—the very kind of people to have insolent servants; and it was more than fifty years ago; advancing refinement of manners affects the servant class, as, let us trust, it does their masters. The same consideration applies to other incidents in Thackeray's social pictures, which may seem overdrawn, according to the standards of the present day. Another point which should be taken into account is, that Thackeray injured his own conceptions to some extent by his ill-advised undertaking to illustrate some of his own serious works; "Vanity Fair," and "Pendennis" particularly. With the pencil he was a capital caricaturist and comic sketcher, and the illustrations to his charming child's story, "The Rose and the Ring," are delightful, and just what were wanted. But when he attempted illustrations to a serious work, he spoiled his own conceptions. There is nothing overdrawn, for instance, in the literary portrait of Jos. Sedley; but Thackeray's marginal sketch shows a kind of "Tichborne Claimant" figure whom we could hardly fancy even a scheming Becky consenting to take for a husband; and the angry contempt which many people feel for Dobbin's awkwardness is probably based a good deal (without their knowing it) on the unhappy and almost caricatured sketches in which the author himself made the gallant officer do penance.

It may be doubted, also, whether the collective republication of all Thackeray's shorter miscellaneous writings, mostly intended for light periodical literature, is altogether an advantage to his permanent reputation. "The Hogarty Diamond," and "The Amours of Mr. Deuceace" are, no doubt, masterly

<sup>2</sup> Thackeray's ready invention in significant names of this kind, however, may be recognized as a legitimate form of literary sport. One of the best examples is in the messroom conversation in "Vanity Fair"; "about Mademoiselle Ariane of the French Opera, and who had left

her, and how she was consoled by Panther Carr." Why "Panther Carr?" A good question for a Thackeray examination paper.

<sup>3</sup> In the view of this critic "The Virginians" was Thackeray's best work. Need more be said?

in their way; and Charles Yellowplush's *Afew!* is a bit of sport we could ill spare, were it only for the toasting of "Bullwig." But seriously, are any of the "Snob Papers" worth permanent preservation, except Gray's dinner to Goldmore? Any of the "Sketches and Travels in London," except "Going to see a man hanged"? I used to make another exception in favor of the account of the Dinner of the Bellows-menders Company; but it did not survive the test of reading it aloud to listeners. And then there is "Men's Wives," for instance, as well as others of the miscellaneous studies; clever and (it must be confessed) rather unpleasant satire, such as it took a clever man to write, but hardly worth tacking to his name permanently.<sup>4</sup> Thackeray's genuine greatness rests on his two historical novels, and on his three most prominent novels of modern life—"Vanity Fair," "Pendennis," and "The Newcomes"; and on the latter more especially than on the former. This opinion is, I am aware, in opposition to that of Thackeray himself, who said that he "wished to stand or fall" by "Esmond"; and it is in opposition to the popular verdict, which usually cites "Esmond" as the author's masterpiece, while among literary critics there has been a tendency of late to regard "Barry Lyndon" as the most remarkable of all his works. I am (respectfully) of the mind that author, public, and critics are all mistaken on this score; and that Thackeray would have been a greater man had he written nothing but "Vanity Fair" than had he written nothing but "Esmond." He himself, no doubt, was conscious that in a literary sense "Esmond" was his most finished work, and that more thought and trouble had gone to it than went to anything else he had produced; it is more sustained

and concentrated in aim and plan than any of the modern-life novels; it is free from their occasional exaggerations of conception and expression, and it has a greater and more equable charm of literary style. For the quality of style—that quality which may perhaps be defined as "words in their best order," and which claims our admiration not only for the thing said, but for the manner in which it is said—is not predominant in Thackeray's modern-life novels. Like Byron, he rises into style when under the influence of strong feeling, but rarely otherwise. All this is an admission that "Esmond" is a more complete and finished work of art than any of the modern-life novels; but if we revert to the view maintained above, that the novel in its highest development should be regarded as an extended drama of human action and character, finish of artistic form will not in itself settle the question of priority of place. Such a reasoning, carried to its logical conclusions, would result in putting Racine above Shakespeare. "Esmond" is no doubt the best historical novel in the language; in it the author has achieved the peculiarly difficult task of combining a graphic treatment of historical events with a life-like and characteristic portraiture of individuals, real and imaginary, while he has avoided the snare which Scott fell into, of attempting an archaism which could not be maintained; there is just a sufficiently old-fashioned manner in the writing to create an old-time atmosphere about the narrative, the whole of which is, in this respect, in keeping from beginning to end. "Barry Lyndon," now that those unfortunate personal reflections are mostly cut out, is a work of equally complete character in its way; a masterly study of sus-

to be the artists. The question is, whether it is best for Thackeray.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, the public may say they have a right to a complete edition of all Thackeray wrote; but it does not follow that the public are

tained irony combined with a vivid sketch of a past state of society and manners, more especially in regard to the life of military adventurers on the continent at that period.

✧ But remarkable and complete as these two works are, from a literary point of view, I cannot think that they can be held to vie in interest with such a vivid and varied dramatization of human character in modern life as is displayed in "Vanity Fair," and its two great successors in the same kind, nor that they afford such a convincing display of exceptional genius and inspiration. It is in respect of these novels of modern life that Thackeray's countrymen, for the most part, have hitherto entirely failed to do him justice. In these he has shown a knowledge of human nature, a variety of invention of human character, an instinctive power of giving to each personage his appropriate and characteristic utterance, which, if we cannot call it equal to, is at least analogous to that possessed by Shakespeare. In this sense he has at all events come nearer to Shakespeare than any other writer in our language has attained. Exaggerations there are here and there: Lady Ann Newcome's absurdly weak behavior on coming to Miss Honeymoon's lodgings, for instance; the Major's reverential tone in regard to Lady Clavering's furniture, when he found it was "*the* Lady Rockminster" who had approved of it:—exaggerations which Jane Austen would not have dropped into; but then how limited was her field in comparison with Thackeray's! What a keenness of observation he shows, too, even in the host of his minor characters, who merely come incidentally into the story; how perfect is the Dowager Lady Rockminster, for instance, the sensible and dignified old lady of the old school, with just a little too much of the pride of caste about her; Hobson Newcome with oats in his pocket, playing the

country gentleman on 'Change; Mr. Gilles, who dined at Hobson Newcome's when his wife would not, and his talk about it on the walk home; Mr. Pynsent, with his brusque and rather stupid but well-intended sincerity; Captain Goby, with his sponsorial responsibilities—"Gad! I promised to teach her her catechism, but, Gad! I haven't"; even the infinitesimal part of Grady, and his objection when Altamont called to him to keep out "the play-actress and her mother," and that the party was off—"Shall I say that, sir? and after I bought them bokays?"—a sentence which exhibits the whole Grady mind at a stroke: these and a thousand other passing touches, which seem to come to Thackeray without the slightest thought or effort—just taken in his stride, as it were, and as if he saw and heard the people—constitute, when summed up, almost as remarkable an evidence of genius as the creation of the leading parts in this Human Comedy.

But then as to those leading *dramatis personæ*—they are such an unfair picture of society, you say? All the able characters so selfish and worldly, all the good ones so weak? Such a cynical view of life, you think? That cry of cynicism against Thackeray—to dispose of it first—is really too stupid for one's patience; one cannot understand the nature of the perceptions of the people who raise it. There never was a writer whose love for humanity was more obvious, more genuine, more sincere—welling up as it does, from time to time, in passages such as those which close Chapters XLIV. and LIX. of "Pendennis," or Chapter XXVI. of "The Newcomes"; passages which come from the heart if ever anything did. We see it again in his love for children and boys, always the index of a warm and generous nature; indeed, all his life he seems to have retained much of the boy himself. But nowhere more



strikingly is Thackeray's love for mankind displayed than in his faculty (and this also how Shakespearian a note!) of recognizing the possible spark of good in a bad or inferior nature. Over and over again we come on this trait; in the lament of that scoundrel, Barry Lyndon, over the remembered figure of his little dead son, the one being he had ever loved; in poor Rawdon's sudden outbreak to Lady Jane on the way from the sponging-house—"You don't know how I'm changed since I knew you and little Rawdy"; in old Lady Kew's unexpected tenderness to Ethel (at the end of Chapter XXXVIII.); even in the kindly way in which honest Captain Macmurdo is disposed of:—

Old Mac was famous for his good stories. He was not exactly a lady's man; that is, men asked him to dine rather at the houses of their mistresses than of their mothers. There can scarcely be a life lower, perhaps, than his; but he was quite contented with it, such as it was, and led it in perfect good nature, simplicity, and modesty of demeanor.

I believe that this charge of cynicism is really a kind of revenge taken by the commonplace crowd against Thackeray for having told them the truth about themselves too plainly. In inditing his comedy of modern life, he was no doubt spurred to a great extent by a moral indignation, which had its groundwork in an intense love of truth and hatred of shams, and which fired off its bolts especially against two forms of social humbug—the hunting after titles and worldly honors, and the prostitution of love and marriage at the counter of finance. Possibly he hammered at these two subjects a little too insistently; perhaps, also, he was rather too prone to buttonhole the reader and ask him if he (or she) were in this or that point any better than other people. Yet, if the snobblism *qui stupet in titulis*

is far less blatant than formerly—is in fact rather in bad odor now—is it not to Thackeray's protest that we owe this reform? And, on the other hand, is his satire against loveless and interested marriages any less needed now than when he delivered it? And, as to the heartlessness of conventional society, which moved Laura Pendennis to say to her husband—"What a dreadful place this great world of yours is, Arthur; where husbands do not seem to care for their wives, where mothers do not love their children, where children love their nurses best"—is that out of date? Why, it is only the other day that I heard of a young fashionable married woman apologizing to a visitor for the crying of her child, who had been brought in to be exhibited, by saying, quite simply—"You see, he does not know me." Had not Society, in place of sneering at Thackeray, better try to learn the lesson he taught—still in great part unlearned?

And is it not to this same feeling of retaliation that we owe some portion, at least, of the popular depreciation of Thackeray's characters, as being either weak or wicked? Partly, perhaps, it is that people do not fully appreciate Thackeray's principle in fiction, which was to paint life as it is lived, not to invent romantic heroes and heroines. Amella is no doubt a weak/little woman (he wanted such a figure partly as a foil to Becky), though she astonished Becky not a little by her dignity of rebuke in that fine scene after the departure of the troops from Brussels; but she is a perfectly natural character, so much so that there are few among us, perhaps, who cannot recall some one whom she reminds us of. But when women speak sneeringly of Laura Pendennis as a commonplace and merely goody-goody person, one is tempted to think that the real explanation of this tone about her is that they feel their own hearts and lives rebuked be-

fore her simple yet adorable loftiness of character. If it is not this, the reason must lie in Bacon's theory, that though the crowd may look "with astonishment and admiration" on virtues of the lower and middle order, "of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all." So far from being weak, wherever Laura appears she dominates all around her by sheer nobility, sweetness, and truth of character. Is she weak in that fine scene where Arthur Pendennis offered, with a kind of condescension, his would-be *blasé* affection to the young girl in the hat and garden gloves, and received from her a lesson on the true meaning of love which must have sent Master Pen back to the house feeling rather small? Is she weak when, in her sweet, serious way, and against the promptings of her own heart, she recalls Pendennis to the duty which lay with him in respect of Blanche Amory, after the discovery of the latter's birth? Is she weak when she gives that simple but all-sufficient answer to Ethel Newcome's worldly banter—"I know what you are thinking, Madam." "I am thinking," said Laura, blushing and bowing her head, "I am thinking, if it pleases God to give me children, I should like to live at home at Fair-oaks"; with that one quiet stroke demolishing the fashionable house of cards and opening the gates of the sacred temple of life. Laura Pendennis was not a genius—was not meant to be one; she was Thackeray's ideal of the "perfect woman, nobly planned"; and it is an eternal honor to any writer that he should have conceived and worked out such an ideal, and women ought to reverence his memory for it.

Not less striking in its way is the figure of that other less faultless heroine, the beautiful proud girl born into the midst of a life of shams and conventionalities; constantly betraying, by

flashes, a certain contempt for it; struggling long between her own innate nobility and womanly feeling, and the temptations of wealth and fashion; finally rising to a higher life through the schooling of social misfortune and disgrace. With all her faults, there is always a noble bearing about Ethel Newcome; the remembrance of her gives a certain consecration to the unlabeled streets of old Mayfair; one walks about them (or the present writer used to do so) with a fancy of possibly meeting her in the flesh. With what truth and feeling too, has Thackeray painted that often enacted soul's tragedy, the apparently hopeless love of a fine and high-spirited, but poor and rather humbly born young man, for the beautiful goddess who seems placed by circumstances so far out of his reach; the little kindnesses that have to be made so much of in memory; the alternations of hope and despair. "The sarcastic dodge is the best," says poor Clive, in one of his feverish talks with his friend; "that puzzles her; that would beat her if I could go on with it. But there comes a tone of her sweet voice, a look out of those killing gray eyes, and all my frame is in a thrill and a tremble." It would be difficult to convey more keenly the impression of the glamor and fascination of great beauty; of the anguish of passionate and unrequited love.

It is a popular idea, again, that Colonel Newcome is a simpleton. The advocates of this theory must surely have overlooked the Commander-in-Chief's general orders in granting leave to Colonel Newcome, when Sir George Hustler "could not refrain from expressing his sense of the great and meritorious services of this most distinguished officer, who has left his regiment in the highest state of discipline and efficiency." The Colonel was no fool in his profession, at all events. He did two foolish things; undertaking

business operations which he did not properly understand, and standing for Parliament; but he was egged into them both, in the one case by rascals, in the other by friends who he modestly thought were better judges than himself. The fact is, not that he was a *simpleton*, but that he was a *simple-minded man*; the two characters are as wide as the poles asunder, though there seem to be a large number of people in the world who cannot see the difference. It is significant that it is only the vulgar and snobbish actors in the story who thought Colonel Newcome stupid; we know how dear Laura loved him; and the gentle Lady Ann, who, though not a powerful intellect, always shows the delicacy of feeling of a true lady, if she did not quite understand, respected and liked Colonel Newcome from the first. The Colonel was a simpleton to Barnes Newcome, no doubt; are we to adopt the standard of Barnes Newcome in judging of character? Unless we do, the right estimate of Colonel Newcome's character as drawn by Thackeray may be summed up in the conclusion that it constitutes the finest and most eloquent sermon ever preached on the text, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." But whatever may be thought of the Colonel, the popular theory that Thackeray's good people are all weak surely receives a knockdown blow from George Warrington, the truest and noblest gentleman, as well as one of the most healthy and hale intellects, portrayed in modern fiction. His character alone, one would think, is sufficient answer to those who assert that Thackeray only showed at his best in the portraiture of bad or foolish characters. As all womanly women ought to thank Thackeray for Laura Pendennis, so should all manly men be grateful to him for George Warrington.

The Fortnightly Review.

We have been speaking of some of his leading characters, and of their influence on one another, as if they were real people, for indeed they all seem to be so—Lord Steyne, whose every speech tells—"The richly dressed figure of the wicked nobleman, on which no expense has been spared"; Lady Kew, worldly, witty, and heartless; Lord Kew, erring and good-natured; Pendennis, whose career typifies that of the average well-meaning man with average virtues and weaknesses; Mr. Smee, R.A., talking shop and making up to possible clients; M. de Castillonnes, with his ridiculous French posing and hatred of "Angleterre"; Mrs. Hobson Newcome, with her virtue and her Royal Institution lectures, and æsthetic and literary "At Homes"; Barnes, with his superficial polish and absolute littleness of soul; these and a hundred others who play their parts, small or large, in Thackeray's "*Comédie Humaine*"—are they not all living personages, clear-cut and recognizable; people whom we have met or might meet? And as to that remarkable creation, Major Pendennis—as a study of a character whom we wholly despise and yet cannot help half liking, is it not an intellectual effort which may fairly be compared with Falstaff? And are we to be asked to place beside, or above, these living creations, the conventional puppets of the "Repartee" and "Conundrum" school of novelists? Are *their* personages like living beings, such as we can meet in our daily life? Possibly Thackeray was not a philosophic thinker; possibly he was not a finished or consummate literary stylist. But for insight into human nature, for depth and fulness of human sympathy, for power and variety in character-painting, he stands absolutely alone among English writers of fiction.

H. Heathcote Statham.

## THE PRISONER.

It was in Tropical Australia.

Two men were playing chess by lamp-light in the central room of a big, white, corrugated-iron house that stood on sloping ground a little back from the road that led through the township of Golindie. The rainy season was supposed to have ended, but showers had fallen during the afternoon and evening, and there was a sound of dripping and trickling water in the warm, still air. From the creek, some two hundred yards away, came the incessant hoarse outcry of bullfrogs.

The room, which had no ceiling but the lofty roof, was furnished with a large oblong table, two benches, three chairs, and an iron barrack-bed covered with a mosquito-net. The fluted walls were of a pinkish buff, and the wooden framework which divided them into large rectangles was painted dark brown. The subdued clicking of a telegraph instrument came through the open door that led into another room. The house was a combined Police and Telegraph station, and the chess-players were Western of the Police and Ross the telegraph operator. They wore the customary indoor dress of that part of the world—cotton singlets and pyjamas, with bare feet.

"It's your move," said Western, leaning back after a long pause, and relighting his pipe.

Ross had a habit, a disastrous one for a chess-player, of hearkening half absently to the sound of his instrument, through which, hour by hour, ticked every message from Europe to Australia.

"Yes, I know," he replied, with his eyes focussed upon infinity. "Listen," he continued, "somebody coming up from the road."

There was a trampling and splashing

on the soft wet soil outside, and presently a "cooey." Western took up the lamp, and the two men walked out on to the veranda. They stood there, some four feet above the ground of the yard, looking into the darkness, till a horse and rider came into the circle of the lamplight.

"That you, Western?" said a voice.

"By Jove! it's Barton!" cried the policeman. "Hullo! Barton, old man, where do you come from? Glad to see you. Hold on till I get the lantern. Here, Jim!" he shouted, stamping his feet into canvas shoes, and jumping off the veranda. "Here, take 'em nanto longa stable. Give it feed," he added to a bearded blackfellow who emerged from an outhouse.

Barton dismounted smartly enough, but he walked up the steps and across the veranda stiffly and with the air of one who has been too long in the saddle. He was a tall, well-set-up fellow of twenty-six or thereabout. His flannel shirt and moleskin riding-breeches were stained and sodden, and splashes of mud, of several different colors, marked him from spur to shoulder.

"Thanks, Western, I won't sit down or do anything," said he, after greeting the two men, "till I've got a message off. Line clear, Ross? It's urgent. George Hansen killed out at the Copper Mine; speared by Long Charley."

"Good God! Here, I'm on in this, Ross," said Western, as the telegraphist sat down to his instrument. "Tell me the yarn, old chap, and I'll send it at Government expense. Poor old George. I saw him when I was out there from the Caroline last year. Well, we ought to get Master Charley this time. Any evidence? Were you there?"

"Hold on a bit," said Barton. "Let

me tell the story in my own way, and then you send the wire by all means. I'll cut it as short as I can."

"Fire away," said the policeman, getting ready his writing materials. "You look as if a drink would do you good. I'm what they call a teetotaler in these parts, and there's no whisky, but this Victorian claret is pretty decent."

The tumbler shook slightly in Barton's hand as he began to tell his story.

On the eighth day after the evening when he had set out to tell his story at Golindie, Barton stood in the witness-box of the court-house in Port Daly.

The lofty oblong room had something of the air of a chapel, with its rows of varnished benches, its fibre matting, and high windows. A punkah, pulled by a Chinese boy, swung to a stately measure above a long bare table at which the jurymen were sitting: they had just returned from "viewing the body," which lay in a shed at the rear of the court-house.

Barton gave his evidence clearly and without repetition. He had arrived (he said) at the Green River Copper Mine at about 11 A.M. on the 9th, and found the deceased, George Hansen, who had lived there alone as caretaker since the mine had been abandoned, suffering from a spear-wound in the back. He, the witness, had attended to him as well as he could, and had extracted the spear-head (produced) from his body. Hansen had died about six o'clock the next morning. The witness identified a paper which the deceased had written before his arrival. In it, and orally, he had made a statement to the effect that he had been speared by a blackfellow named Long Charley. Just after Hansen's death, Father Celsius, a missionary, had arrived at the mine, also Mr. Gellibrand and Mr. MacIntyre. The body had been temporarily buried, and the witness had ridden

to Golindie and reported the affair to the Police.

The coroner asked Barton one or two questions, and was about to dismiss him, when Scanlan the solicitor stood up.

"Your Honor," said he, "I have just received a telegram from the Protector of Aborigines authorizing me to watch this case on his behalf. I ask Your Honor's permission to put a few questions to the witness."

The coroner who was also the Judge of the district, assented.

"Now, Mr. Barton," said Scanlan, "do you know Long Charley?"

"No," replied the witness. "That is, I believe I have seen him."

"You believe? Was he pointed out to you?"

"No, I saw him—I saw a blackfellow on the day before the murder, and from what I heard later I believe he was the man."

"Oh, and where did you see him?"

"Between the mine and the river."

"How far from the mine?"

"About six miles."

"You notice, gentlemen," said Scanlan, "the witness saw a blackfellow—one blackfellow, gentlemen—six miles away, on the day before the affair happened, in a neighborhood where, as we know, there are thousands. Then he gathered from the words—from the ravings—of a dying man that a certain blackfellow had done the deed, and jumped to the conclusion that the man he had seen was that particular blackfellow."

"I should like to say—" began Barton.

"Never mind what you would like to say, sir," interrupted the lawyer; "we are not here to listen to what you would like to say. We want facts. Will you swear that you saw Long Charley? Will you swear, from your own personal knowledge, and irrespective of anything you may have been told since,



that Long Charley was within five miles of the mine on the 10th instant?"

Barton was obliged to answer "No."

"Now," Scanlon went on, "take this paper. Did you see Hansen write it?"

"No; he told me he had written it."

"Can you identify the handwriting?"

"Yes."

"Have you any writing in your possession which you can swear is his?"

Barton was prepared for this question, and had taken from a pocket-book a paper which he handed to the lawyer. The latter read it in silence.

"Who wrote this?" he asked.

"I wrote the body of it, at Hansen's dictation. The signature is his," replied Barton.

"H'm. It seems to be a leaf from a pocket-book."

"It is a leaf from my pocket-book," said Barton.

Scanlan handed the paper to the coroner. After a pause he went on. "Gentlemen, this document is a will, written by Mr. Barton upon a leaf of Mr. Barton's pocket-book, and purporting to be signed by the deceased Hansen, in which Hansen bequeaths all his property, including his interest in certain silver claims, to Mr. Barton. The will is unwitnessed save by Mr. Barton himself, and His Honor will tell you that it is informal. May I ask, Mr. Barton, how long you had known the deceased?"

"A few days."

"And the silver claims—do you know where they are?"

"Yes; they are in the Green River district."

"Does any one else know where they are?"

"No," replied Barton.

"Thank you, that will do," said the lawyer, sitting down. Then, partly from habit and partly because he had observed that the interest of jurors in the examination of a witness was usually in direct ratio to the amount of

pain inflicted, he sprang up and added another question—

"One moment, please. During your short acquaintance with this man, Hansen, were you upon good terms with him?"

"We were very friendly," said the witness. He colored a little as he spoke.

"Oh, you had no quarrel with him at any time?"

It was a chance shot, but it went home; truthful Barton colored again.

"Well, yes, we had a sort of quarrel; but he was—he'd been drinking."

Scanlan warmed to his work. His questions followed in rapid succession, and the stylographic pen of the white-uniformed Police trooper who acted as clerk flew over the paper. The coroner once or twice showed impatience. Once he said, "Really, Mr. Scanlan, is this relevant?"

"Of course I bow to Your Honor's decision," returned the lawyer, sulking his action to the word; "but I'm sure Your Honor will agree . . . most important . . . no hasty conclusion . . . jury . . . state of public feeling with regard to these natives of the country, owing to the memory of the previous most unhappy affair, which, I am sure, is fresh in all our minds . . . unfortunate prejudice against the man whom I may perhaps be permitted to call my client . . ."

Barton had left the box. He sat mopping his brow and feeling uncomfortable. There was no doubt he had had a trying time. . . . What hard work it had been digging that grave. . . . He had ridden—what was it?—a hundred miles in a night and a day; two hundred in three nights and two days. And oh, that voyage in the little launch, with the corpse and the Chinese engineer! Two days, or was it three? And the nights. . . . By Jove! How many nights since he had had any sleep?

"... had known each other only a few days, and during that time there had been gambling transactions, gentlemen," (Scanlan was addressing the jury.) "They had had what he was afraid he must call a drinking bout, and this had ended in violence. Shots had been fired, gentlemen. They had the witness's own statement to prove these things; and then, what did they find? Here was Hansen, dead, murdered as it appeared, and here was the will bestowing a mining property, a secret mine, gentlemen, upon the survivor. He suggested nothing, he made no imputations, but they were bound to consider reasonable probabilities. . . ."

Through the dusty upper panes of the windows the sky looked (Barton was thinking) as it looked in England—a deeper blue. What a patch of color that was, the rectangle framed by the doorway; the red road, the vivid green of the jungle that fringed the cliff, and the ultramarine sea beyond. . . . What a strong smell of carbolic acid! . . . Why, he must have been dozing! There was Scanlan, still on his legs. Scanlan was very tall; the edge of the punkah-frill lightly brushed his head at every sweep. It was a bald head; a tall lawyer who had much practice in that court was bound to grow bald, Barton thought. . . . What was that Scandan was saying?

It was true that they were not trying any man for his life, but nevertheless a grave responsibility rested upon them. A charge had been made against a native. There was nothing in the evidence to support that charge beyond a scrap of paper. As a legal document that scrap was worthless, for it was as informal and as unauthenticated as the will. . . . There was no proof of motive for the crime. . . . The black man, under the wise and just law of the land in which they lived, was entitled to equal justice with the white man. . . . The evidence of Father Celsus, a

reverend gentleman whose experience made his opinions on the character of natives very valuable. The so-called Long Charley had been baptized, and for a time at least, had led a regular and virtuous life at the mission, where he even tilled a plot of land. . . ."

Father Celsus was recalled, and in answer to the Inspector of Police said that he knew that Paul (alias Long Charley) had worked at the copper-mine about a year ago. The witness believed that he had been ill-treated by a miner named George, surname unknown.

The coroner summed up. He pointed out that there was very little evidence. The post-mortem examination had shown that death had resulted from a spear-wound, and that the deceased had probably been drinking. The evidence of his verbal statement was at second-hand. It was not evidence upon which any person could be convicted, but it was worth their consideration in attempting to get at the truth. The same with regard to the written statement. It was not a formal deposition, but if it was made by the deponent in the knowledge that he was about to die, it was most probably true, and they would be right in giving it weight. It was for them to consider. . . .

"In my opinion," said the coroner, in conclusion, "Mr. Barton has given his evidence in a straightforward manner, and though he admitted that there had been a quarrel between him and the deceased over cards, and even violence, I think that his subsequent conduct, in giving information to the Police, and in assisting them as he has done, was that of an innocent man and a good citizen.

"Gentlemen, consider your verdict."

Barton was standing on the veranda when Murray of the Police came along.

"Here, old man," said he, "come in and have some tiffin. You've been

having a pretty rocky time. That swine Scanlan!"

In the airy little messroom the half-dozen troopers sat in their singlets and white trousers. Barton, well-known to most of them, was made welcome. A Chinese servant brought in the prawn curry, and the delicate fresh chutnies compounded by the Singalese cook. For dessert there was placed before each man a pineapple, cunningly peeled, its juicy, butter-colored spiral topped by its blue-green leaves. Barton was so weary that talk was a painful effort, and before the meal was over he was glad to stretch himself upon one of the iron beds in the adjacent barrack-room. He was left undisturbed, and when he woke at sunset Murray brought him the verdict, "Wilful murder against Paul, alias Long Charley."

"Tom Reynolds and old Davy Mack were the only bushmen in the crowd," said Murray. "It's their verdict. I was in and out of Logan's office, and heard them talking. Hayes and the other Peddlington storekeepers and town men wanted 'Person or persons unknown,' but those two stuck out. 'Pairrson unknown be dahmned,' says Davy Mack; 'Ah know the herren-gutted black scoundrel well enough, and he knows me, the child o' hell!'"

"Well, what next?" inquired Barton; "what's going to happen now?"

"The warrant's issued, and I expect Western will start to-morrow. Rather rot sending one man on a chase like that. Perhaps one of us will go from here with him, but I don't know; we're short-handed. One thing, Western knows that country."

"I think I shall go with him," said Barton. "I've got nothing much to do, and I left the horses and my blackboy over there at the mine. You'll take me, won't you, Western?" he asked, as the latter came in and began to strip off the uniform he had worn all day in court.

"Glad to have you, my boy. Between us, we'll collar the scow. Don't let the Old Man know."

That evening Barton dined with Payne, the other lawyer of the little town. After dinner they sat in deck-chairs on the veranda, smoking.

"You know, Payne, that nigger has got to hang. You'd understand how I feel about it better, perhaps, if you'd seen that poor devil sitting in his blood and waiting for death in that lonely house, as I did. I promised him I'd see justice done, and—well, it comes to this; I mean to see the thing through. I'm not a blood-thirsty chap; but I should be ashamed not to do that."

Payne, who had listened attentively to the whole story, presently said, "Look here. If that chap's caught I shall most likely prosecute for the Crown, but I'll tell you straight,—you won't repeat it, of course,—there's no case to hang a dog on, let alone a blackfellow. You and I *know* he did it; but as for evidence, my dear fellow; why, in spite of your ride to Gollindie and all that, there's as much against you as against him. And, another thing (this is particularly confidential); I don't believe, whatever further evidence might be got, that Government would wish a conviction pressed for. This country is run by the parsons and the press between 'em. No," he added, after a pause; "I'm not a betting man, but I'd lay you four to one in sovereigns that Long Charley *won't* hang. Not for this business, anyhow."

Barton and Western had been travelling almost incessantly for ten days. At the outset, and upon the face of it, their task of finding their man in that wild country seemed to Barton, eager as he was, almost impossible. Actually, the task was no light one: Western was probably almost the only man in the whole country who could have undertaken it with any chance of success. Per-

haps partly because he had spent several years in India while still very young, he had a remarkable facility in acquiring languages, and he now had a considerable smattering of four or five among the many dialects spoken by the blacks between the Fanny and the sea. Along with, and by means of, this knowledge (rare among the white residents of the country), he had learned a good deal about the native customs and intertribal relations. In that region there are tracts a few square miles in area, separated by frontiers, now natural, now imaginary, where the natives are so divided by differences of language and custom, and by their own mysterious laws, that they form practically separate nations.

At most times it was the custom of Long Charley (Arndnamurria, to give him his proper name) to disregard these frontiers and to wander at will, for his fame as a desperado, a slayer of white men, whose cunning had defeated the white men's law, endowed him with something of the immunity enjoyed by the "bad man" of far-western America. Now, however, Western thought it likely that he would avoid the territory of tribes timid but hostile, who might take advantage of his being "wanted" to rid themselves of a dreaded outlander. "Then, again," said Western, "he's bound to keep away from the telegraph-line and the road, indeed from the neighborhood of all settlements. He's about the best-known blackfellow in the whole country, and there are one or two places along the road where he's chary of showing his ugly mug at the best of times. While the news of this affair is fresh he won't go within miles of the road. Later on, if we miss him now, he'll be sending his lubra to hang round the Chinamen at Fir Creek or the Two-in-the-Bush to get opium or liquor for him, and I'll be on the look-out for her. For the next month or two, I reckon he'll either lie

low in his own country, between the road and the river, or else make down the river, through the Telkina country, to where the coast blacks are. He went there after the massacre three years ago for a bit, with his mates Ninka and Wirriwanni."

Thus deciding which avenues were open to the offender, Western was able to make his plans and work the pursuit systematically. It was a long business, however, at best, and they owed much to a lucky accident. They happened one day upon traces of a camp beside the track, where it led through a gorge in a high range. The remains of the fire were unmistakably those of a black's fire, and "Mahdi," Western's blackboy, who had been a Government tracker in Central Australia, pounced upon specks of flour among the ashes. The party moved slowly after this, following the trail which, over the stony country, was visible only to Mahdi's eye. It was a good piece of tracking: once Barton became incredulous and thought Mahdi was "humbugging," as he said; but at a word from Western the tracker turned up a leaf of a bush and showed a grain or two of flour upon its underside. Once he found an empty tin that had held boiled mutton, half hidden in a tussock of grass. It had been jagged open with a spear-point: part of a sack of flour and some tinned provisions were known to have been stolen by Hansen's murderer. Now and then, in a more favorable patch of country, Mahdi would cease his minute scrutiny and walk ahead rapidly, reading the track as one skims at a glance the contents of a fairly-written page.

The trail was now far away from the cleared track. It led across a tangle of limestone ridges, thickly covered with casuarinas and thorny scrub. The ground became more and more rocky and tracking more difficult. When it fell dark the party camped in a hollow, that their fire might not be

seen. There was no water except what they carried in their canvas bags, and they dared not bell the horses, so these were perforce tethered.

"See here," said Western, "that fire wasn't more than two days old. I'll tell you what's puzzling me. If Charley has been lying up somewhere, and got a move on him because he knew we were about, why on earth did he make that camp so near the track, where almost any one might spot it? If, on the other hand, he has been moving all the time, and doesn't know where we are, how is it he hasn't got farther away than this? He might have got right down to the river-mouth by this time. Niggers are cranky devils, I know; but I can't see our friend waltzing round in this limestone country and wearing the skin off his elegant feet just for fun. What do you make of it?"

Barton pondered, sluicing the dregs of his tea round and round in his pannikin. "Isn't it possible," he said at last, "that it may not be Charley's own track at all? I know the flour and the bully-tin point his way; but there's his lubra, you know. Poor old George saw her, and she carried off the flour. Perhaps Charley left her behind."

"By George! Barton, you've hit it, I believe!" exclaimed the policeman. In such country as we've had, it would be difficult to tell a lubra's track from a man's. Damned stupid of me, though, not to have thought of it. Well, it's my belief whoever made these tracks was bound for the river, by way of Mount Henry, and I'm inclined to push on at daylight for the flats at the foot of that range. It'll be hard lines if we can't pick up the tracks in the boggy ground, and if Emma's alone we may find her camped, and perhaps get some information: anyhow, she'll pay for watching. *Dekho, Mahdi!*" (sometimes in speaking to blacks Western

used Hindustani words). "Why, where's that boy got to?"

As he spoke Mahdi appeared. For reasons of his own, he had slipped away and done a little prospecting ahead.

"Western," said he, "I think it, this feller track belonga lubra. Me bin find 'm 'nother feller fire, find 'm this feller." He held out a small "dilly-bag" made of native string, such as lubras carry. In it was a tin match-box: Western opened this, and found a few matches and about an inch of tobacco.

"Aha!" cried Western, "you see it is the lady, and she isn't far away, either. This is a Kurandi bag; only a lubra would carry it, and Emma's a Kurandi woman. She's scared, or she would never have left her tobacco. On a dark night like this she won't go fifty yards if she can help it. Hullo! Hark!"

"Coo-oo!" a native cry, came from no great distance ahead, followed by a "Coo-ey," such as white men give.

"By the Lord!" cried the policeman, "that means she's here, and has spotted us, and wants to palaver!" "Yohai! Melbaza! It is peace!" he shouted in the Kurandi dialect, with a long outpouring of liquid polysyllables, chosen less for their precise meaning than to show knowledge of the tribe and friendly intention. In a few minutes the lubra appeared. She was a tall, thin, ill-favored woman, whose years had passed the twenty-five, or thereabout, which spell middle-age for her sex and race. One eye squinted so much that only a segment of the iris showed, with sinister effect. Naked, save for a kilt of faded red cotton cloth, she crouched trembling in the firelight. She had some words of English, and with the occasional aid of Barton's boy, Harry, it was not difficult for Western to question her. For half an hour or so the conversation, in Pidgin English and "Native," went on, and then Western turned to Barton.



"Well," said he, "Mrs. Ardnamurria is a pretty shady customer, and we must not build too much on what she says. I should trust her less than I do (and that's not much), only I know she rather liked George Hansen, and went to some trouble to give him the straight tip about L. C. He'd been hammering her then, and she says something about it now—possibly all humbug. The odds are she has been knocking about here lately to keep an eye on our movements and give him *khubar*. But she *may* be turning dog on him, and anyhow, we can't afford to miss a chance." He spoke a few words to Mahdi, and the tracker took Emma a short distance from the white men's fire to where the two blackboys were camped.

"Well, what does she say?" asked Barton.

"The main thing is, that Charley's camped at a place they call Wara Lunana, or Old Man Rocks, about 'two feller sleep' from here. I've heard of the place before, but it so happens I've never been to it. I think it's about twenty-eight miles northwest of Mount Waterton; that's about sixty from where we are now. As I say, Melbazna may be playing false, but it'll do us no harm to go there and see; it's not an unlikely story, either, and anyway, we'll hold on to her for the present. Mahdi and Harry will see that she doesn't bolt, and give her plenty of tucker. My idea is, to go on at daylight to the Big Billabong and give the horses a drink and a spell, then for you and me and Emma to take the three best horses (she can ride) and push on to the place, leaving the boys to follow when the horses have rested a few hours. If we find His Nibs, we can make Westport in a day from there; if not, we shall be no worse off than we are, and it'll be a good place to camp for a day or two."

"All right," said Barton; "I'm on.

Just think; we may have the brute in irons by this time to-morrow!"

They rolled under their mosquito-curtains, and were soon asleep.

The Old Man Rocks stand near the edge of a winding, stony, flat-bottomed gully, divided by a serrated range of rocky hills from the basin of the Green River. They cover an area about half a mile in length by a third of that in width. Their appearance is such that from a little distance the traveller might easily believe that he had happened upon the time-defying ruins of some ancient abandoned city, for many of the rugged fragments are of the bigness of an ordinary house, and here and there a pinnacle shoots up to a height of seventy or eighty feet. The color of the rock, where it is not hidden by creepers, is that of the masonry of some age-old Norman castle, and some of the crags have the form of rude and massive arches. A thousand years before the first white man set foot on Australian land, this gully was the channel of the river; the rocks were carved by millions of tons of swirling water ages before they were seen of any human eye.

Where Nature had hollowed a cave in one of the largest masses of gray stone, Ardnamurria had made his refuge. The place was well chosen, for, though distant only a long day's ride from the small settlement of Westport, it was difficult of access and far removed from any beaten track. The chamber in the rock was entered by a narrow opening, and the smoke, when a fire was necessary, escaped through tortuous fissures, overgrown and hidden by a great banyan tree. In the cave were the remnants of the plunder of the house at the copper-mine,—a few tins of food, flour, some matches and tobacco. Four or five spears, with a womera or throwing-stick, lay upon the floor near the almost extinct fire, and

a heap of dry sticks for burning occupied a corner. Beside the spears lay George Hansen's revolver.

The Australian aborigine has an almost unlimited capacity for sleep. The tenant of the cave had spent most of the day in slumber; the coolness of the air now warned him that the sun was low, and he arose from his stolen blanket, yawned, and stretched himself. The murderer of George Hansen was well over six feet in height; his shoulders, chest, and arms well formed and muscular. Like all his race, he was "too fine" below the waist; his hips were small and narrow, and his legs, inordinately long above the knee, were, though serviceable enough, as he had often proved, almost absurdly slender. Still, as he stood there, naked save for a leather belt (his victim's) round his middle, he was no bad specimen of a savage. His head was covered with an artificial mop of hair made by plastering tufts from the heads of dead friends or enemies to his natural locks with the wax of wild bees. The face was not ill-moulded; a scanty coarse moustache drooped to the pointed chin. Rows of long scars, the seams of cuts prevented from healing smooth by the introduction of ashes under the skin, decorated his body, which was smeared, besides, with a reddish, greasy earth. A cut on one foot made him slightly lame.

There was no water-holding vessel in the cave larger than the empty tins that strewed the floor. Picking up one of these and a spear, Ardnamurria prepared to fetch water from the tiny native well about a hundred yards to the north of the cave. After a reconnoitring glance from the opening, he emerged and swung himself down to the ground by means of the roots of the banyan.

The sun was near setting, and the violet shadows of the rocks were

lengthening, when Barton, Western, and the lubra dismounted and tethered their horses in a clump of jungle about half a mile from the Old Man Rocks. It was the second day after Melbazna's appearance. The lubra had spent a year or so of her youth on a cattle-station, and was no novice on horseback.

"Allow me, madam!" said Western, with a mock bow, as he took the rein of the horse Melbazna had ridden. But he spoke almost below his breath, not being sure how near they were to their quarry. Few words were said as the three began cautiously to advance on foot through the scrub that fringed the gully: their tactics had been decided on during the journey, and impressed upon the lubra by frequent repetition. "Your legs are longer than mine," Western had said to Barton; "you keep your eye on her ladyship. Remember, if she once gets out of your sight she'll vanish like a lovely dream, for good and all, so, if she bolts, you leg it after her."

They came within fifty yards of the cave, and Emma pointed to the entrance and the means of reaching it. Western, who had a quick eye, suddenly dragged Barton into a crouching posture and whispered, "I saw him, down there to the left front, bending down. I expect he's getting water. There are rocks on two sides of him; it's a straight run-in. Never mind Emma now. It's an eighty yards' sprint from the edge of the scrub."

The lubra (whose sight was probably defective owing to her squint) had not seen Ardnamurria, and was now scrambling up to the opening of the cave. In the few seconds of the white men's crouching advance through the last of the low scrub bushes, she entered the cave and came out again. As they started to run toward the well, she leapt to the ground and followed them, running like a deer. Hansen's revolver was in her hand.

The well was at the apex of two converging walls of rock. As Western had said, Ardnamurria had rocks on two sides of him. To reach the water he had had almost to lie down. At the instant of his rising erect he heard a cry from the lubra, and turning swiftly, saw the two white men running at full speed towards him. Flight was impossible. He poised his spear: as he did so a shot rang out, and Western dropped with a bullet through his thigh, the impulse of his speed driving him forward as he fell. Barton checked neither for the shot nor for Western's grunted oath, but ran on. As the spear flew from Ardnamurria's hand within its own length of Barton's face, Emma, behind him, leaped over Western's prone body; Barton ducked his head like a pugilist, and as the lubra opened her mouth in another shriek the spear passed between her lips and severed the main arteries of the neck. She fell, spouting blood, and Barton was at grips with her slayer.

Ardnamurria was now unarmed, and Barton had never unbuttoned the pouch of his revolver. It was man against man. Their wrestling was of the primitive, unpremeditated sort that Nature teaches when life and death wait upon the issue; for in the mind of the savage surrender is mere suicide, and Barton knew that his adversary would kill him if he could. Round and round they whirled, stamping and straining. The only sure grip on the writhing naked body was afforded by the belt, and Barton's left hand never loosed it. The long black arms were whirling, the fingers working like a panther's claws. Barton's shirt was in bloody ribbons. His booted heel trampled the murderer's wounded foot. There was a yell, and the butted head came at his face like a cannon-ball; his teeth jarred; filthy hair ground into his eyes and mouth. . . . He swung his right, and his soul drove the fist hammerwise

upon the angle of the blackfellow's jaw. As the blow crashed home he flung his whole weight forward, risking a fall. . . . Ardnamurria was below him. He shifted his grip to the throat, and dropped with his knees upon the blackfellow's body. In a minute more he had turned the prisoner on his face and secured his arms with his belt. Western flung him a pair of handcuffs, and he fastened these upon the ankles.

Western was sitting up nursing the revolver which he had taken from the dying hand of Melbazna. "Played, sir; played, indeed!" said he, and fainted.

. . . . .  
The moon had risen. Western, with his wound bandaged as well as Barton could do it with strips of clothing and a handkerchief tourniquet, was reclining with his back against the rock. Barton had made tea in the quart-pots, and they had shared a meal of biscuits from their saddle-bags and one of the tins found in the cave. The intermittent chime of a bell came from where the hobbled horses browsed beyond the belt of scrub. Barton had just returned from giving a drink to the prisoner, who lay with his feet handcuffed to a stout sapling.

"I feel all right now, thanks, old chap," said Western. "No pain lying like this. I must have lost 'whips' of blood, though, as poor old George would have said. You know, one can't blame the old girl much; after all, he was her man. I'd like to know just when she made up her mind to round on us. I don't believe she thought of it till she saw the revolver. She might have sung out before, and His Nibs would have legged it, and with the mokes half a mile away we should have stood a poor show. First time I ever heard of a lubra shooting! Perhaps she didn't know it would shoot more than the once. Well, she's paid for her double treachery, and we'll call it square."

"When d'you expect the boys?" asked Barton. "I don't feel keen on digging a grave at this time of night."

"By Jove! I should think not," replied Western. "Leave that till the morning, at any rate. Oh, they'll turn up somewhere about midday. But if I feel as fit in the morning as I do now, and can climb on to old Moses's back, I don't think we'll wait for them. The sooner we get this joker off our hands the better I shall be pleased."

"Well, I suppose we can send some one out from Westport to bury Emma."

"As to that, when we've wired to Peddlington most likely the Old Man will decide to have an inquest, and then we shall have to send a wagon out for her. By the bye, I expect they'll try Charley for this job, as well as the other; and there's no doubt about convicting in this. Pity it isn't a hanging business. Because you dodged, and the spear hit a person it wasn't meant for, the charge will be only 'attempted murder,' so they can't hang him. 'The law is a hass,' isn't it?"

Barton said nothing in reply, and stood for five minutes meditatively gazing at the fire while he cut up a pipeful of tobacco and loaded his pipe. Then he cleared his throat and said—

"He's got to hang, anyway."

The tone made Western look up. "What do you mean, old man?" he asked. "If you mean he deserves it, I'm with you. The *badmásh* ought to have swung years ago." (Long Charley had been sentenced to death and escaped by a legal flaw.) "But that's no business of ours."

In the firelight, as he stood in his ragged shirt, with his moustache matted into a cut on his cheek, Barton looked very big and grave. "It is my business, Western," said he. "I saw George Hansen die, and I—well, I as good as promised I'd see justice done. Payne told me—I know it's practically certain he'll get off. And now the

only eyewitness lies there dead. Let me take him away and hang him now."

Western, looking up into the grave face, seemed to himself to be in a kind of dream. "There's the stolen property," he said musingly; "the revolver, and all that; . . . to be sure, I daresay Scanlan will make out that I planted it. . . ." He raised his voice, "You're not serious, are you?" he asked sharply.

"Indeed I am," replied Barton. "It's got to be done, and I'm going to do it." He spoke altogether without excitement.

Western laughed on a single short note. "Get out! my dear chap, what are you talking about? Hang my prisoner?"

"He's mine," put in Barton, quietly. "Oh, is that it? Well, he *was* yours—you're right there; you collared him, and devilish well you did it, and I thank you, Barton, and I'll take care you get credit for it. But he's mine now, and don't you touch a hair of him. This isn't Arizona, sonny; it's the good old British Empire, every time! And I'm in charge, Mr. Barton."

Barton lay down and put his head on his upturned saddle, with his back toward the policeman. "Look here, old man," he said, kindly, "don't you worry yourself and get excited. Go to sleep."

"Sleep be hanged!" retorted the angry little man. "Never heard such damned nonsense in my life! Hang him, indeed! Barton, I warn you! I'll do my little best to hang *you*, if you try any tricks. Mind that, now!"

Barton was silent.

"I wouldn't have believed it of you, Barton—by God, I wouldn't! Did you think that because I—because I'm not in love with this blasted police business, I'd sit by and see murder done? . . . Murder! Cold-blooded, deliberate, common or garden murder! . . . Can't you hear, you bloodthirsty beast? . . ."

Western's objurgations went on for some time, but his voice was growing weak, and in spite of his indignation the exhaustion caused by his wound mastered him at length, and he fell asleep.

The smoke had ceased to ascend from Barton's pipe, but he had never been more wakeful. From time to time he threw an alert glance at the chained black feet on either side of the sapling. The fire had burned low, and the moon was not far from her setting when he rose. Western was peacefully sleeping, and Barton moved cautiously not to awake him.

Western had served as an officer of mounted volunteers in some little frontier war in India, and it was a fad of his to carry a coiled and pipe-clayed picket-rope on his bridle. Barton detached the swivel and put the rope in the breast of his shirt. He walked over to the sapling and stirred up the sleeping prisoner, making signs for silence. In a minute or two the handcuffs were transferred from ankles to wrists. Ardnamurria made no resistance or attempt to escape. He was sullen, and even in thought he probably asked no question concerning the purposes that moved in the mysterious mind of the white man. He had fed and he had slept.

They moved away, and presently disappeared among the shadows of the rocks.

In the gray light of dawn Barton again approached the fire, alone. He walked slowly, with bent head, and eyes fixed upon the stony ground. For a few minutes he stood looking down at Western's quiet sleeping face. Then he began to rake together the ashes of the fire—the act that signifies, for the bushman, that a new day has begun. He filled the quart-pots and set them on.

It was a little lighter when Western

opened his eyes, smiled, frowned, and tried to sit up. As he sank back against the saddle that had formed his pillow, his eyes again rested upon Barton's face: its expression would have told a less imaginative beholder that something had happened. The policeman flung himself round, gave one glance towards the sapling, saw no prisoner, and with a white face again sank back, clicking his teeth on a groan. "What the . . ."

"I've done it," said Barton, hoarsely.

"For God's sake, don't play the fool. Has he got away?"

"He's dead," answered Barton, quietly; "I hanged him."

Western stared at him, the blood coming slowly back into his face, and belief into his mind. He had known Barton for three years; though they had met only at wide intervals, they were friends. They had tastes in common; tacitly each recognized in the other a man of his own caste. And now they had lived and worked together for a space, had shared the little hardships and adventures of the bush, had been dependent upon each other for the intercourse which keeps men civilized. As a climax, they had shared danger. Western shut his eyes and reviewed the situation.

"You are my prisoner, Barton," he said at last.

Barton nodded. There was silence. The prisoner made the tea and cut open another tin of meat. The wounded man drank, but did not touch the food. The sun came up. Presently Barton moved in the direction of the creek.

"Stop!" cried the trooper; "where are you going?"

"Going for a wash," replied the prisoner.

"Not out of my sight," ordered Western. "Go and sit down under the sapling there." He was fumbling his revolver.

Barton looked at him for a moment.



"All right, Western," he said. "Don't fidget with that pistol—we want no more shooting. If you want another," he added, slipping the holster off his belt, and laying it by the other's hand, "there's mine." He walked over to the sapling, and sat down obediently.

This attitude of complete surrender had no mollifying effect upon the man propped against the rock. His helplessness (though he strove to ignore it) and his uncertainty of how he ought to act were conspiring, with the pain and other effects of his wound, and his naturally irritable temper, to work him into a fever. He began to reckon the time at which the blackboys ought to arrive. "With any luck," said he to himself, "they might be here at ten . . ."

He had to admit to himself that if he delayed his departure too long he might be unable to reach Westport at all, but he refused to contemplate the impossibility of mounting his horse unaided. "I'll give them till half past," he muttered. . . .

The bells of the horses were still occasionally audible; they had found a patch of good feed by the creek.

Barton had covered up the corpse of the lubra with some bushes.

At last Western looked at his watch, and found that the hour had come. He made a valiant effort to rise, but it was useless. Sweating with pain, he remained balanced on one knee, the wounded leg stretched out. Barton was beside him in a moment.

"Fetch up the horses," growled Western unwillingly; "I'm going to start. That'll do! Let me alone!" he added, as the prisoner, with the gentleness of a nurse, lowered him to an easier position.

In half an hour Barton had the horses saddled and ready. Fortunately Western's horse, Moses, a gray who, like so many good Australian horses, showed evidence of the great Godolphin strain both in form and manners, was

quiet and had easy paces. The wounded man was obliged to allow himself to be lifted into the saddle: once mounted, he made a shift to ride, leaning most of the time with his arms on the gray's neck. He insisted upon Barton showing him where the corpse of the murderer swung horribly from the limb of a white-stemmed eucalyptus, the feet a few inches from the ground. At the sight Western's anger broke out anew, and he bitterly reproached the self-appointed executioner.

"You must needs take my picket-rope, too!" said he. "Well, there's no time to cut him down and bury him. Get on ahead! . . . Of all the infernal, cold-blooded— . . . Get on, get on, can't you! . . . Oh, I'm all right; I don't want your help!"

Their course lay something to the east of north. In about a couple of hours they struck an old track, where heavy wagons with machinery had passed two years before on the road to a tin mine, since abandoned. After this, the way was easy enough to find.

Western grew weaker fast. Once the bleeding broke out afresh, and Barton had to lift him down and renew the bandaging. He swore horribly at the delay, at the pain, at Barton, at his horse. Barton was soon obliged to hold the trooper's rein. The third horse, accustomed to carrying a pack, followed them without leading. They plodded on through the hot afternoon. Barton was extraordinarily patient and gentle; once only did he utter any remonstrance, and then he appeared to be ashamed of his impatience a moment later. Western was querulously repeating his previous words about "cold-blooded murder." "Look here, Western," the prisoner broke out, "you've got me; that is enough. For God's sake, drop it!"

A minute later he had dismounted and was walking beside Western's

horse supporting the almost fainting man in the saddle. And something, whether the words or the renewed contact or some obscure process in the mind of the trooper, seemed from that moment to open the latter's eyes to another view of the situation. He suddenly said, "I wish some one else had this job!" and there was a difference in the look with which he returned Barton's anxious glances. There were no more reproaches.

Western was half delirious at intervals as they drew near the outskirts of the township. Of the half-score of houses, the first they came to was the store. Morris, the proprietor, stepped off his veranda as they came up. It was enough for him that here was a sick man: he helped Barton to lift the policeman from his horse, and in a few minutes they had him laid upon a comfortable bed. Morris's daughter, a wild, barefooted lass, bred in the country, began to busy herself about the invalid. The first words he said were—

"I want to send a telegram. Where's Spencer?"

"You can send a wire," said Morris, laying forms and writing materials upon the table; "but Spencer's away,—looking for Long Charley, I expect."

Spencer was the police-officer of the place. Barton took the pen and wrote—"To Police, Peddlington. Urgent.

*Blackwood's Magazine.*

Long Charley arrested, now dead. I am here, wounded. Please send medical assistance, also man to take charge of Barton, European, arrested for murder of Charley. Spencer absent."

The prisoner held this up before the policeman's eyes. He nodded, and signed the message with a pencil. "I'll take it," said the prisoner.

It was less than a quarter of a mile to the telegraph-station. Barton had reached the gate with the fateful paper in his hand before the thought struck him that he was carrying what might be his own death-warrant.

He stood still for a moment, then saying to himself, "I told Western I would," he walked into the office and paid for the despatch of the message. The operator was a stranger to him, and probably thought he was in the police.

Night had now fallen. Barton returned to the store and purchased a blanket, a mosquito-net, three or four tins of meat, and some biscuits. Under the curious eye of Morris, he bestowed these things in his saddle-bags and on his saddle. Western, it appeared, was now comfortably asleep. In the yard behind the store, Barton put his saddle on the spare horse (which was his), and taking the rein of the other in his hand he mounted and rode away into the dark.

*Ernest Dawson.*

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## PARACELSUS REDIVIVUS.

Every day brings us something new, but the novelties are either soon forgotten or prove to be not quite so interesting as we thought them to be. In some cases the brilliant invention of yesterday becomes the nuisance of to-morrow.

Could we not for a little while man-

age to do without any new discoveries, leaving well alone and trying to settle down comfortably in the new world as it is now made for us before being startled again? The march of science is as irresistible as fate; every day we have to re-adjust our notions concerning life and our relations to the uni-

verse. No sooner have we got over the shock of the motor-car than we are face to face with the aeroplane: we have hardly mastered the rudimentary facts concerning radium before we are threatened with helium; and if we rightly understand the full meaning of the very latest and most startling scientific discovery, we look at our golden sovereign (if we have one) and sadly wonder how soon it may only be worth twopence.

There never was a more mistaken and absurd craze than the endeavor to make gold. Even now, in the twentieth century, all eyes are turned to the men of science who discover the mutability of elements, and the papers are full of enquiries and suggestions whether it may not indeed be possible to turn lead into gold! "Why not, if radium can turn into helium?" says the sanguine man in the street. "By George, who would have thought that those old alchemists were on the right track after all!" We may feel assured that radium, helium, polonium, barium, and all the other *ums* will in the long run prove in some way to be of immense value to the race, but they will never fill our pockets with gold. This can be of course demonstrated without the slightest doubt. At the present moment what does it cost to get a sovereign out of one of the Johannesburg gold mines? If we take the average dividend of gold-mining companies to be ten per cent., it costs exactly 18s. to make a sovereign. Add the cost of carriage, wear and tear, and minting, and it will be seen that even a mine of gold is not such a wonderful thing as it looks.

Admitting the possibility of transmuting lead into gold, the supposition of science to-day is that it works the other way, the nobler metals being more likely to change into the inferior ones, which would be of doubtful use to any one,—but admitting the possi-

bility, it would either be a process more costly than gold-mining, in which case it would be a meaningless advantage, or it would make gold at once so common that a sovereign might indeed be worth only twopence. Chemists can now make artificial rubies and diamonds, but they are very small and the work is not financially successful. The moment they could be produced at the cost of a few pence or a few shillings, nobody would wear jewels any longer. This fear of unforeseen results was not altogether unknown in former times. Henry the Sixth was a great believer in alchemy, and felt so sure of success that he publicly announced his hope of soon being able to pay off all the debts of the nation in real gold and silver; but his grandfather, Henry the Fourth, had a more sensible notion of what might happen, and by statute forbade the making of gold. And in the act of accusation against the Protector Somerset occurs this remarkable note: "That you commanded multiplication [alchemists were called *multipliers*], and alcuemstry to be practised, thereby to abate the king's coin."

Instead of the realization of the alchemist's dream being a benefit, it would do an incalculable amount of harm to nearly everybody on earth; the upsetting of this standard medium of exchange would be worse than any fiscal mistake, worse than ultra Protection or ultra Free Trade could ever be. All this is so well known that it is hardly worth calling attention to it, except for the sake of those who never reflect on the terrible complications of modern life and the danger attending every attempt at upsetting its equilibrium.

It is possible to give them the benefit of the doubt and to believe that the alchemists of old were as disinterested as our modern scientific men, and only racked their brains, cracked their crucibles, got choked by the fumes or

blown up for their pains (as once happened to the painter Romney), purely for the benefit of humanity at large. It is also allowable to doubt this, and to believe that every alchemist would have feverishly guarded his secret, because the moment it was known it would be valueless for the reasons aforesaid. After a fashion they succeeded sometimes. A German of the name of Thornheuser once succeeded in turning the half of an iron nail into pure gold. Why he did not finish the job while he was about it is not known, but Evelyn, who saw it in 1644 in the Ceimeliarcha or Museum of Florence, suggests an acceptable reason: "In a press near this," he says, "they shewed an iron nail one half whereof, being converted into gold by one Thornheuser a German chemist, is looked on as a great rarity; but it plainly appeared to have been soldered together."

So much for Thornheuser. If they were all as ingeniously dishonest as he, the alchemists could not have been anxious to benefit the human race very much. Evelyn does not explain the mystery any further, but it is supposed to have been a very common trick of those exceedingly mysterious philosophers to work such miracles for the purpose of extracting real gold from the pockets of the rich and credulous patrons anxious to promote for their own benefit the search after that exceedingly elusive Philosopher's Stone. Fortunes have disappeared in those crucibles out of which nothing ever came. *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*, but the patrons were not as wise as the fox in the fable, and they continued to hope against hope.

Nobody would be taken in by such a composite nail in our days, a much simpler and easier way having been since discovered in the Prospectus. Fact and fiction are in that document very cleverly joined together, but it is not so easy to detect the soldering. The

modern alchemist works with ledgers and statistics, instead of with crucibles and alembics, and he understands the art of keeping the gold. The old Rosicrucians did not even know how to do that, for it is not on record that they ever became rich enough to build themselves palaces as their successors now do. What beame of all the money they wasted is not the smallest part of their miraculous labors.

Isaac D'Israeli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, puts the case of transmutation in a nutshell.

Modern chemistry is not without a hope, not to say a certainty, of verifying the golden visions of the alchemists. Dr. Girtanner, of Gottingen, not long ago adventured the following prophecy: "In the nineteenth century the transmutation of metals will be generally known and practised. Every chemist and every artist will make gold; kitchen utensils will be of silver and even gold, which will contribute more than anything else to prolong life, poisoned at present by the oxides of copper, lead and iron, which we daily swallow with our food." . . . This sublime chemist, though he does not venture to predict the universal elixir which is to prolong life at pleasure, yet approximates to it. . . . Sir Humphrey Davy told me that he did not consider this undiscovered art an impossible thing [he must have spoken of the gold, not of the elixir], but which, should it ever be discovered, would certainly be useless.

The nineteenth century passed without fulfilling the prediction of the Gottingen chemist, but we are quite prepared to make the same prophecy for the twentieth century. It is almost without doubt that gold will be made artificially in time for the present generation, and we may at the same time repeat the prophecy of Sir Humphrey Davy that it will be perfectly useless so far as any advantage to our pockets is concerned.

The Elixir of Life is quite another matter. Whatever their gold may have been worth, it is astonishing to note, in the light of the latest scientific discoveries, that the chemists of the Middle Ages, ignorant as they were, were undoubtedly on the right track, without knowing it, in more ways than one. They strangely mixed up the gold and the elixir together, tracking them both with equal assiduity, and we see now, in the use already made of radium in our hospitals, how closely these investigations are allied. These men were not all humbugs pure and simple. Paracelsus has a bad name, metaphorically as well as in reality, for his real name was Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, a name which would not inspire one with much confidence, but he showed the proper spirit of the investigator when he wrote: "Away with these false disciples who hold that this divine science which they dishonor and prostitute, has no other end but that of making gold and silver. True alchemy has but one aim and object, to extract the quintessence of things, and to prepare arcana, tinctures and elixirs, which may restore to man the health and soundness he has lost."

In England, Roger Bacon, born in 1214, was the greatest believer in this wonderful elixir, which was nothing else but potable gold, that is, gold dissolved in nitro-hydrochloric acid. At the first blush one would think that this delectable stuff must be rather indigestible, but in urging it on the attention of Pope Nicholas the Fourth he informed his Holiness of an old man who found some yellow liquor (the solution of gold is yellow), in a golden phial, when ploughing one day in Sicily. Supposing it to be dew, he drank it off, and was straightway transformed into a hale, robust, and highly accomplished youth.

We do not know if Pope Nicholas

took the draught; but we know he is dead. By a singular coincidence they both died in the same year, doctor and patient, and the elixir of life, if they took it, failed them both. One cannot help feeling a sort of sneaking kindness for such an old chemist, the precursor of the great scientific men of our day. He believed so touchingly in the chimera he pursued with such untiring zeal all his life long. Which would he discover first,—the yellow gold, so useless in his aged hands, or the elixir of immortality which would give him the time to find it, to enjoy it for ever? We seem to see the bleared, red-rimmed old eyes peer anxiously and carefully in the crucible. Perhaps he *has* found it! He can at least try and take a draught of the unpleasant stuff; and the old limbs totter to the couch under the dried crocodile that swings among the cobwebs, to rest and wake, tired no longer, the warm blood of youth coursing through his veins! What, as he sinks in a half slumber, are his thoughts for the morrow? Bend again over his fire and his blow-pipe, choke again the day long in fumes of sulphur and arsenic—not he! Cap with feather on his head, and out into the fields where the birds are singing, or to the market-place where the girls are filling their pitchers at the fountain, as gay and gallant a youth as never he was before!

When the gray light of morning falls on the dusty parchments, on the death's head, the rows of phials and the crocodile, the old chemist, Paracelsus, or Valentine, or Roger Bacon, opens his weary eyes, and remembers! Is he young now, vigorous, buoyant, elastic? The stiff limbs rise with a greater effort than ever from the couch. Another day of work, of hopes and disillusion lies before him; the secret is not yet found, and he must begin afresh, though time flies. Soon he will not be able to work at his cruci-



bles and alembics any more. Would it be unkind to wish that he never had awakened again, but slept for good with that hope of happiness and youth as his last thought on earth?

Another reflection suggested by this threatening "abatement of the king's coin," by making gold as plentiful as brass and leaving at the same time all its value and glory in the crucible, is whether science, with the very best intentions in the world, may not have other and much greater disillusiones in store for us. There is such a thing as the Philosopher's Stone of the twentieth century, searched for with all the zeal and fervor devoted of old to the discovery of the elixir, the making of nails of gold, or the recovery of the Holy Grail; and this alluring will-o'-the-wisp of modern times is the mysterious origin of life. We cannot stop the search by statute, as King Henry did, though we may foresee that the discovery, if ever it is made, will not add to our happiness. If anything could be worse than knowing nothing, it would be to know all. It may be true that science does not interfere with faith in things unseen; we often enough receive the assurance that the two go perfectly well together, and we are often shown another wonderful nail, half science and half religion, but the solder is unfortunately too visible. When biology and chemistry have spoken their last words, we shall be a wonderfully disillusioned race, wiser than Solomon or Solon, but deeply regretting the time when there was something left to wonder about, to have faith in and to hope for. Fortunately that time is far off; there are a few things we do not yet know, and long may they remain unknown!

We may risk the supposition that it was the selfishness and secrecy of the old Rosicrucians that defeated their object and retarded the development of chemistry as an exact science. The

word *exact* did not apply at all to their methods; nothing could be more vague and misleading than the information given by Roger Bacon to Pope Nicholas. The Pope detected the flaw perhaps, but Roger did not seem to see any incongruity whatever in yellow dew carefully bottled in a golden flask, neither did he think it strange that the peasant who drank it turned not only into a youth, but, instead of the clumsy yokel of a youth that he was before, into a most accomplished youth. He did not write in a hurry; writing was laborious work in those days. Handsomely and with the utmost precision did the quill form the old black-letter characters; with the greatest deliberation he confided his missive to paper or parchment, never troubling his head to think how the accomplishments got into that flask or what the Pope would think of it.

The selfishness and secrecy of these old men was almost a matter of course; they each wanted the personal and material advantage of whatever they discovered, not caring much for fame, which in those days meant a very different thing from what it is now. Instead of the servants of the Postmaster-General flashing the news and the name by electricity to the uttermost ends of the earth, the myrmidons of the Inquisition would have quietly sent for the discoverer of radium, and Bombast would have stood a fair chance of being burned alive as a friend of the devil. Radium and helium would not even have been privately exhibited to some mighty patron in a dimly lit laboratory at dead of night, because the mighty patron who grudgingly parted with his gold only in hopes of getting much more in return would have been much annoyed if he received nothing but a pinch of radium as an equivalent for a thousand pounds. In the Dark Ages, when the intellects of patrons were equally darkened, this would have

caused misunderstanding. If in consequence of this unsatisfactory return the patron had cut off supplies, good-by to radium for another six or eight centuries.

The astonishing rapidity with which discovery now follows discovery is mainly due to the fact that all our chemists work together, as in a common laboratory, in the light of day. Every searcher, all over Europe, has his eye on his neighbor's crucible; if one of them makes a discovery he is in such haste to make it public for fear of being forestalled that no great secret could now be kept from us for twenty-four hours. If this is any comfort to people who hope to have the fingering of some sovereigns made scientifically out of some base metal, or to those for whom the subject of gold has in any form or shape a strange but natural fascination, they must nevertheless be prepared for continual disappointments. The great discovery will probably be announced over and over again, received with acclamations of wonder and delight, and discussed in endless leading articles; illustrated halfpenny papers will the next morning give pictures of the *savant* and all his instruments and tools, of his house and all that therein is, and then, unaccountably, nothing more will be heard of it. "Bye the-bye," the man in the street will say to a friend, "you remember that gold scare? What has become of it? I never hear anything of it now." But slowly, by these repeated announcements, the public mind will be enlightened on the subject; the pros and cons will have been exhaustively discussed, and when at last the real undoubted discovery is made, it will fall flat.

This foreseen conclusion does not in the least diminish the ardor of the search, and meanwhile, as of old, many much more valuable treasures will come out of the crucible, discoveries by means of which pain and suffering may be further alleviated and reduced, a thing which gold will never do. For

the sake of these incidental boons we are prepared to consider with great equanimity the trouble in store for the bimetalists; what they will have to do to recover the lost balance of finance is beyond our understanding.

It is really fortunate, and not so very disheartening as it otherwise would be, that science, which is bound to find the secret sooner or later, does not any more intentionally work with that object in view. When the gold comes, it will be received merely as an instalment of future knowledge, though of no more immediate value than radium is now; as another door opening on greater and yet more marvellous discoveries. But the only way of counteracting its evil results will be to forbid the making of gold as we now forbid the making of whisky, except under restrictions and limitations. Scientific men will be allowed to do it, as they are now allowed to vivisect, only so far as humanity can be benefited by it. Any outsider who tried it would be treated as an "abater of the king's coin," and the name of Henry the Fourth will receive an additional glory of which he did not dream in his time, as a sovereign who could look further than his nose. We see the application of such a law foreshadowed already now in the working of the diamond-mines of South Africa. From time to time, when the output of the mines threatens to reduce the value of the precious stones, the hours of work are reduced, or the mine even closed altogether for a while. The diamonds are all there, but nobody is allowed to find them. The whole world may not by that time be sufficiently enlightened to render an application of such a law universally possible, but it is a problem that stares us in the face and it will have to be solved some day. If meanwhile the natural gold of this world were a little more equally distributed, we could look forward to that time without much concern.

## THE EASTERN MIND.

It was May, in the year 1901, the fifteenth day by our reckoning, the third in the older style of Crete. The weather had been bolsterous for a fortnight past, and under some unseasonable influence shifting gales, lowering skies, and frequent rains had succeeded to the serenity of April. A heavier fall than usual set in on the afternoon of the fourteenth, and became a tropical deluge in the early windless hours of the night. I was camped by a large magazine, the only building upon the Zakro beach, and about a quarter of a mile from the mouth of a river which comes down to the bay from the upland shelves of Sitia. Its noble gorge, straight-cut as a Colorado cañon was set so thick with old trees and tangled undergrowth when I saw it first, that a man might not pass along its floor. But in the broader upper valley corn-plots, orchards, and terraced gardens flourished abundantly above the high-water mark of the stream, and a little deltaic plain, spread fanwise behind the beach, was more fertile still.

I had presently to abandon the tent, which was proof enough against ordinary rain, and seek sleep in the magazine. Its mud roof was leaking apace, and the four dismal walls damply reflected the lamplight; but for even so much shelter on such a night I had to be thankful. I woke in a gray dark. There was fierce hissing of wind, and a dull splash of rain on the sea-front of the building, while the roaring of breakers, where had been dead calm a few hours ago, told of an on-shore gale risen during the night. Striking a light to see how long it might be still to dawn, I marveled to find that the hour of sunrise was long past.

A dismal beginning of day. I tried

to sleep again, but the Greek servants moving restlessly about the building infected me with their uneasiness. Though the house was built on shingle and sand, it lay far out of the course in which the river had flowed for centuries. There could hardly be actual danger ahead, however much damp discomfort. But the untimely gloom, split by fitful shimmer of lightning, the downpour reinforced by a tempest of driven spray—so near the sea were we sheltering—and the intermittent thunder, heard even over the ceaseless roar of breakers which rolled almost to the door, were not heartening. Water stood deep on the plain behind, but as it was finding its own outlets to the sea, I took more heed of the water overhead, which so quickly penetrated the mud roofing that there was nothing for it but to disturb the careful order of stores and baggage, and the results of my last fortnight's digging, and collect all under waterproof sheeting in the middle of the magazine.

I was making a cold and sodden meal, when there was a sudden shout, "The river! The river!" I stumbled outside and waded to the south end of the long windowless building. The whole flooded surface of the plain behind it had begun to move towards us. Torrents, growing momentarily stronger and deeper, were sweeping round each end of the magazine and cutting under its shallow foundations. Even as I looked, a crack ran like a lightning fork down the masonry of the north end of the building. It opened ever so little; and then my kitchen slid noiselessly (for one could hear nothing above the roaring of skies and water) into the torrent. It seemed time to be gone. In the near end of the maga-

zine was standing a mare, but, mad with terror of the lightning and water, she would not budge, even when the back of her stable followed the kitchen; and after a frantic struggle she had to be left to her fate. The boy and I plunged into the northern race and staggered through; but the overseer and the cook, lingering a moment to search for the latter's beloved pinfire gun under the ruins of his kitchen, found the water already too deep and strong, and had to wait for a life-line; whereof the cook lost his hold and was all but swept to the sea. Fortunately, higher ground was only a few yards distant, and thither we all fled.

For two hours, wet to the skin—and it seemed wet from skin to skin as well—we had to crouch in what shelter we might and watch the ruin of the valley. The deluge of the skies never abated a moment, and the solid earth seemed to melt beneath it. Where your tread rang yesterday on the flinty hillside, you might now sink ankle-deep. The very heart of the storm was hanging over us; lightnings forked ceaselessly on one hand or the other, and each thunder peal echoed the last. The gale, a full-bodied "Levanter," had still to do its worst; and under its awful lash the seas, deeply stained with the ruin of the fields, reared higher and higher against the boiling tide which the land was pouring in. The river now filled the whole valley from hill to hill, here sliding with a swift and malignant smoothness, there, broken on some obstacle or penned in a sunken gully, heaving, writhing back on itself, tossing turbid waves one across the other. Trees rode past us in an endless tumult, gnarled planes and centenarian holm-oaks from the river gorge, or olives and charubs telling the fate of the higher gardens and orchards—all horribly tangled with horned carcasses, spinning and sucked under only to be spewed up again, and swept to the sea.

It was a ceaseless Homeric combat of two floods. The great trees, hurled against the breakers, reared, plunged, and broke back like hunted monsters of the deep; till at last, where the forces of propulsion and resistance neutralized each other, they gathered in an ever-broadening Sargasso Sea, jostling in wildest turmoil.

During the last hour of the storm the wind seemed to assert itself above all the other cataclysmal forces. The southern point of the bay, where a sunken reef sheers up into jagged iron cliffs, seemed to provoke the most horrid uproar; and thence, through all rival sounds of land and sky, came down the wind a ceaseless thunder of riotous seas, leaping to the summit of the rocks. From the cliff's crest two misty trails, like smoke from high chimney stacks, streamed far inland, which were, of course, the ruin of storm-waterfalls, caught in their last leap and whirled to spray; but the Greeks who watched with me, finding any and every wonder credible in that convulsion of all nature, would have it the central fires of earth had broken out at two vents; and I doubt not they still add that crowning portent to their tales of an unforgettable day.

While the tremendous spectacle continued, no one of us gave much thought to his own miserable state. For once in our lives we watched the carving of the earth. By evening, when the rain mist was withdrawn at last, the whole face of the scenery was seen to be changed. The old estuary of the river existed no more, but a broad and shallow mouth had been opened some way to the north. The bay which had offered deep anchorage close in shore since at least the time of Spratt's visit in the fifties, now shoaled gradually for a mile, and was studded with the toppling crests of grounded trees; while all the strand of pebbles and grassy dunes had been replaced by a stretch

of mud at a level lower by some six feet. Over two-thirds of the plain were sand and stone, where fertile fields and olive gardens had been; and such trees as had held their ground were buried to mid-trunk. Looking up the river gorge, I saw that where the vineyards had been terraced up the cliff face was now nothing but naked rock; while all that ancient tangle of forest had vanished to the last shrub, and the sinuous valley floor, as far as the eye could follow it, glistened naked as a city pavement after rain.

When all was quiet again, about half the shell of my magazine was found to be standing, saved by the yielding of the beach to right and left; and the mare, quite unhurt, shivered still in the only remaining corner of her roofless stable. My personal loss was small. I had to find new quarters, repair much that was broken, and put up with the loss of irreplaceable stores and utensils, but of nothing absolutely indispensable to the camp. But if I had come off lightly on the whole, not so had the natives of the valley. Its single village, when the Headman came to make his official report, was found to have lost 4500 fruit-trees, 100 head of live stock, and many houses and farm buildings. Communication with the rest of the island was cut by the washing-out of every mule-path, made with the labor of years; and the best springs of drinking water were smothered under a landslide. Finally all irrigated fields and gardens soever, terraced along the stream, had been swept away. The villagers had lost in that quarter not only the crops of the year, not only the fruit of their trees for several years to come, not only even the trees themselves, but also the precious irretrievable ground on which alone there could be growth again.

The sum of the disaster came to this. Almost all the members of a community of poor husbandmen, with noth-

ing but their lands to look to, had lost in a few hours all that they possessed over and above the barest means of subsistence. The adult generation would never again have any but the scanty produce of the higher and thinner fields to live upon. If they would not starve, thanks to the communism instinctive in a simple Eastern society, they would neither grow for themselves, nor have wherewithal to procure, a seasoning of their daily bread. The slow increase of many generations past was not to be recovered by the generation to come. The village, in a word, was ruined.

Cut off by the river all that day, we could only guess what had happened in the upper valley; but during the next morning two or three of the villagers, who held lands in the lower plain, made a long round, forded the stream at their peril, and came down to us. Their tale moved one's compassion. Imagination played over the dull hopelessness of their outlook, over this state of men yesterday prosperous, to-day face to face with the prospect of a bitter inevitable struggle for mere bread. All their hope of joy in life abandoned; all their local pride, so keen an emotion in Greek village society, for ever abased. To my Western thinking such a fate seemed worse than death. Could nothing be done? I was now the single individual in the valley with any superfluity, and I represented a foreign society whose duty and right it was to help. I could not recover their trees or put back their soil, but I could do what the Briton always does in similar emergencies—write a cheque. So word was sent up to the Headman, that I proposed to offer a certain sum to the village, if he would tell me how to spend it.

Next day the ford was just practicable, and I rode across country—for the path was gone—to see the state of things. Every glimpse into the gorge



from above showed how completely had vanished its ancient forest, the most valuable possession of a Cretan community. As the valley opened out and the way lay through the wrecked olive gardens, now become dreary stretches of drying mud, from whose caked surface the wind was beginning to lift swirls of sand, I saw the tree stumps banked high on their upper side with a matted scum of broken boughs, corn uprooted in the green ear, and other ruin of the valley lands. Stranded boulders and stones lay so thick on the once fertile fields as to make all seem one broad river-bed. In the village several houses lay in ruin, and men were still laboring to clear others of the mud left by the collapse of their roofs. I was invited to go on to the Mill and see what evil work the stream had done there. The coffee-house emptied itself of some twenty men, to whom were added half the women and children of the village, all surprisingly cheerful, and vying with one another to be first to show this or that result of the disaster. God had willed it! So each ejaculated piously at the end of a narrative, which lost nothing in the manner of telling. The principal sufferers were pointed out, and seemed not displeased by the distinction. God willed it! they said modestly. The mill proved to be no more; and the miller pointed out its situation with a show of pride and pleasure, which, had I not known the contrary, might have stirred an absurd suspicion that the blessing of excessive insurance was not unknown in remote Cretan villages.

Returned to the coffee-house I found still less to feed the compassionate mood. Seven in ten of the company were not working because they had no longer any lands; and none was drinking coffee, lacking coin to pay withal; but its outward demeanor was anything but what one looked for in despairing men. Nor, if I am any judge

of behavior (and these were very simple folk), was the heart of the Zakriotes heavy within them, the while they talked so cheerfully. The story of the day before yesterday was told again and again with effects added to the taste of the teller, and always with that pious refrain as to the will of God, —a tale of something past and done with, accepted, and not to be reckoned into the present or future.

With emotion not a little chastened, I rose and went to the Headman. He was writing out his report to the local prefecture, and he laid it down to relate with sparkling eyes the narrow escape of his house from a torrent which had come right through a house higher up the hill-side. But when I referred to my proposed gift, he showed less interest. If I had looked to play my Lord Bountiful in Zakro, I had missed the mark, for the man was evidently as much embarrassed as grateful. It was not easy, he said, to spend such a sum on the village as a whole. None was poorer than another in the community. All were poor men. What did I wish to do myself? The church would be the better for a belfry. I was a good deal taken aback, having proposed to myself something of a more eleemosynary sort, or should the water of a certain spring be brought down in pipes? Neither was this just what I had expected. But having more stomach for adding to fountains in a thirsty land than to the tale of its ecclesiastical luxuries, I voted at last for the pipes, and handed over the cheque, not nearly so much after all in pity for a stricken community as distaste of being worse than my word.

What did it all mean? Fatalism? The Eastern Mind? I had been ready once on a time to dismiss the question with such formulas. But that which is mostly meant by "Orientalism," if indeed, anything be meant precisely,

has nothing to do with the simple husbandmen of Zakro. Theirs is no reasoned indifference to the world. Their mind no contemplative habit arms against the quips and scorns of fortune. Indeed, I know not where to find any considerable body of men in the East, of whom it may be said that as a whole it has justified that hackneyed stanza, and

turned to thought again.

Not such races of the Nearer East as the Arab or the Turk, not the peoples which produced and followed Mithridates, Sapor, Chosroes, Ali, Othman, Saladin, Timur, Ghenghis, and many another scourge of Hither Asia, to say nothing of the Farther East. Nor, again, has the piety of the Cretan or of any Greek community ever seemed to me at that profound and pervading sort which could raise it above such a fate as had befallen Zakro. Professors of a religion which has hardly more to do with conduct now than in antiquity, the Cretans show a piety which is not an active cause of strength, but is more like pietism, a symptom of some racial weakness.

Had this been some such mishap as might chance anywhere and be repaired presently in the round of the seasons, one had been content to recall the characteristic passivity of all husbandmen, who are more prone than others to surrender to the discretion of Nature, and take her blows without thought of their injustice, or the possibility of their avoidance. Slaves of the soil they till, to it they look for all being. What it gives may differ in degree from year to year, but not in kind. It is always food, much or little; nor in the best year is there ever a superfluity to be exchanged against other kind of food, or any sort of luxury. For a Greek husbandman to be richer or poorer is to have his belly filled more or

less. He eats to live, and never, except on rare feast days, lives to eat. So he subsists and can do his labor, than which he knows no other occupation of his days, a diminution of his food, or the loss of its variety, will occupy less place in his mind than a being of more complex life would imagine possible. He has been accustomed all his years to such variations according as crops were good or bad; and he accepts changes like an animal, soon ceasing to remember the greater or less. Actual starvation he has not felt, and knows he will never feel so long as the food, possessed by his community as a whole, can keep bare life in each of its members. His joys are found not outside his day's work but in its course—in the satisfaction of bodily appetite, in drinking when he is athirst, in sleeping when he is weary, in warming himself in God's sun, in cooling himself in the shade, in the society of his fellows, his wife and his babes. What does such a man want with wealth, and what is it to him to lose it?

But the disaster of Zakro was too far above the ordinary measure. It must affect these peasants and their sons' sons after them to the last day of life. Less intelligent and imaginative though he be, less able than a southerner to forecast the full measure of his misery, the most stolid northern peasant had surely been dismayed by a lighter blow from the even tenor of his way, maddened or crushed. To hold on after such a hap as before, preoccupied neither by rage nor despair, was to be more or less than commonly human. To be superior to it was to have an intensity of temperament, rare, if not unknown, in a Greek. Melancholy or sanguine, his mood is of little depth and not long endurance. But to be below it! Yes, so one might imagine a child being of no understanding, or some mercurial butterfly soul. But again the Greek is not by nature a butterfly; but

habitually more sombre than gay, a silent man needing strong stimulus to vivacity. His merriment is fitful, gusty, inconstant, and his relapses are long and profound. If he act as one indifferent to fate, it must be no more from the levity than the profundity of his temperament, but from some lack of temperament altogether, some essential inertia.

Such inertia you may see in an intelligent man, physically over weary. But can weariness be predicted of a whole race? Having no better answer to the riddle of Zakro, I dare suggest it; and offer sheer racial weariness to explain that fatalism which, born not of Philosophy, we have come to call Oriental, though it is prevalent neither universally nor exclusively in the East. If it be endemic in certain races of Asia and Africa, it is less conspicuous in other orientals than in certain races of Europe. Peoples of the West Asian highlands have it not, while both in the hills and plains of Greece it is found, and in the Balkan lands, Italy and Spain: in Constantinople, despite the breath of Empire, which still stirs in her streets; even in Rome, which yet draws vitality from the four winds of Christendom.

Yet when one considers the lands marked by this sort of Fatalism, the plains of India, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Egypt, and the hills of Greece, Italy or Spain, they seem little likely to have imposed a common characteristic on their peoples; and indeed, hardly anything can be said of all of them with equal truth, but that alike they abound in memorials of a high civilization, reached very long ago. To enter them is to pass within the shadow of what has been, to feel that the actual is over-weighted by too great a burden of history. Their peoples have been, each in turn, the protagonists of human progress, and advanced all the race a little way on the common road; but it

is many centuries since the last fell out of the leading place.

If there be, then, a general law which accounts for a fatalistic habit, can it be this? That wherever there was a very highly developed civilization very long ago, and the racial blood has not been much crossed by younger stock, we may expect signs of corporate senility as unmistakable as are manifested in the individual. The more strenuous the ancient life, the greater the exhaustion, and the more obvious the fatalistic habit now. It seems nations must grow old like men, and no better can recover their spent youth. The comparison of corporate to individual life-history is in all likelihood much more than an academic figure. It may well be inexorable laws govern youth and age in the mass, as in the single life; and that it is not less fond and foolish for a nation than for any one of its members to think it shall never see death. Youth may perhaps persist longer and age be set further back, according as the body politic be kept well or ill, but surely the lesson of all history is this: not that bodies politic perhaps may die, like the Roman, if certain public vices prevail in them, but that die they all must later or sooner, even if their virility be what the Roman's was. And this further, that they will not be born again. A nation cannot hope to perpetuate her own corporate existence, but must look to live on, if at all, in that of others; and should, therefore, while in her prime, take most thought for self-reproduction, and be studious to bear and foster infant nations, and concede to them their independence gladly, like a wise mother, so soon as they be grown to years of discretion. Thus only may she keep their reverence and love, and rely on their support in her old age. Which, I take it, is a better rule of Imperialism than is commonly given for our learning in these latter days, albeit one that

we have followed; for ours, if any race on earth, has already so reproduced itself, and to such purpose, that no other, envying or hating or affecting to despise us, may say with such assurance, *Non omnis moriar!*

As I crossed the shrinking river again, the lower Zakro plain, the gaunt Cyclopean ruins of its Minoan city rose on the sky-line to mark how much

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higher once was the local tide-mark of civilization. The heyday of Crete was before history, and its record has since been of continuous decline, the record of a people that did its best long ago. Exhausted by that primeval effort it fell out of the course before ever we entered it, and now stands aside to spend, as peacefully as may be, an evening which has lasted already some three thousand years.

*D. G. Hogarth.*

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SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF TOM MOORE'S.

St. Albans, Sydenham.

I have been kindly allowed by my friend Mr. Frederick Strutt to look over and send you copies of six letters of Tom Moore's of exceptional interest, that have never, I believe, been published or printed or known to any one outside the Strutt family. They were in the keeping, until recently, of the late Miss Georgina Hurt, whose uncle married the youngest daughter of Joseph Strutt of Derby. I have contributed a few brief explanatory notes, taken in the main from the now seldom-read eight volumes of the poet's letters and diary edited by Lord John Russell. To these six letters is added one of Samuel Rogers, relative to the poet's affairs, written to Joseph Strutt.

Joseph Strutt, to whom these seven letters are addressed, was the third son of Jedediah Strutt, the great cotton spinner and inventor of the ribbed-stockings frame. He was born in 1765, and died in 1844. He married Isabel, daughter of Archibald Douglas, and had an only son, Joseph Douglas, who died at Constantinople in 1821, and the two daughters mentioned in these letters, Isabel and Caroline. Isabel became the wife of John Howard Galton, and Caroline the wife of E. N. Hurt.

Joseph Strutt, who lived at St. Peter's House, Derby, was a man of exceptional liberality and generosity, and gave the Arboretum to Derby. When Moore came to reside in Derbyshire, Joseph Strutt became his best friend. In several of his published letters he extols the kindness and culture of the three sons of Jedediah Strutt, and admires the stateliness of their respective homes, remarking that they possessed a million of money between them. William Strutt, F.R.S., the eldest son, and father of the first Lord Belper, lived at St. Helen's House, Derby, and George Benson Strutt, the second son, lived at Bridge Hill, Belper.

Writing to Miss Dalby in 1814, Moore says:—

I suppose you have heard that we have been to Derby; and a very pleasant visit we had of it. I like the Strutts exceedingly; and it was not the least part of my gratification to find a very pretty natural girl of sixteen reading the sixth book of Virgil, and not at all spoiled by it. This is Joseph Strutt's eldest girl, a very nice dancer as well as a classic, and a poetess into the bargain. Indeed they have quite a nest of young poets in that family; they meet every Sunday night; and each

brings a poem upon some subject; and I never was much more surprised than in looking over their collection. I do not think I wrote half so well when I was their age. They have fine pianofortes, magnificent organs, splendid houses, and most excellent white soup, and are, to crown all, right true Jacobins after my own heart; so that I passed my time very agreeably amongst them, and Bessy came away loaded with presents of rings, fans, and bronze candlesticks.

The nest of young lady poets included the three daughters of William Strutt and the two daughters of George Benson Strutt.

## I.

Mayfield, Monday, [1815].

*My dear Sir*,—It gave me very great pleasure to hear so soon from you after our arrival. I do not indeed think I would have waited much longer without finding some excuse for resuming the correspondence myself. I am sorry to say none of my little group is the better for our Irish excursion—poor Bessy was taken very ill on the road, and it was with some difficulty and much anxiety I got them all home again. After a week more of rest I trust she will be able to enjoy with me the very great happiness which a visit to Derby is always sure to give us, and I shall apprise you as soon as she considers herself well enough. I regret to find that you do not speak of Caroline so sanguinely as the accounts we have had of her recovery would lead us to expect—but perhaps you only mean to surprise us with the favorable alteration, which I hear, and will still hope, has taken place.

We were three weeks in the County Tipperary during our absence, and *mirabile dictu!* were not shot, nor even kilt, which you know ranks lowest on the scale of personal injuries in Ireland. The state of my poor Country is indeed frightful. All rational remedies have been delayed so long, that there is now none left but the sword, and the speedier it is used the more merciful.

France deserves all she suffers. Why did she leave Bonaparte to fight the last battle of her independence—of her very existence—with little more than a hundred thousand men? But, as you say, it is a dreadful precedent, and makes one shudder for the destiny of the rest of the world—though I believe after all laughing is a better thing than shuddering, and if priests, old women and fat Regents are to have everything their own way to laugh at them will soon be the only consolation left us—*à propos* of this, did you read my Irish epistle to my friend Ben ("Ben mio" as the Italians say) in the *M. Chronicle*?

Best regards to my two dear poetesses, and to Miss L. from

Yours very faithfully,

Thomas Moore.

## II.

On March 11th, 1817, Moore brought his sojourn in Derbyshire to an end, leaving Ashbourne that night for town. He wrote to his mother that day, saying:—

I have taken the inside of one of the coaches to ourselves, and trust in Heaven that I shall carry all my little establishment safely to the end of their long journey.

He had taken a furnished cottage at Hornsey for a year to see to the publishing of "*Lalla Rookh*." On entering his new house Moore was much disturbed by finding "the place full of rats," about which he wrote to his mother in one of his published letters. On the same date he found time to write also to Joseph Strutt. This letter is of much interest as containing the earliest reference to the lyric "*Oft in the still night*."

Hornsey, Saturday, March 22, 1817.

*My dear Sir*,—I need not tell you how scarce time is with me just now—but by a friend like you I know that "every little donation will be thankfully received." The letter I got from you before I left Ashbourne, was so full of



real kindness that I assure you I have looked over it often, very often, since—such things do one's heart good. I know too so well that expressions of kindness from you must have been felt strongly before you give them utterance—all this made your letter particularly gratifying to me.

This place is beautiful and I begin to feel at home in it,—though, at first, I was a good deal disgusted by finding that we were introduced to a disagreeable sort of *political* connection, viz., *Rats*, which the house appeared to abound with, when we came. I flatter myself, however, they felt ashamed of themselves in my presence, for they all seemed to have disappeared and the place is now sweet and pure for the occupation of the "Little dove" as soon as he will make his appearance—do let me have him as soon as possible, and if he cannot fly (though he looks as if he could) pray let him have the safest and speediest waftage this vulgar world of ours supplies—and tell his mother I send her a thousand loves of my own in exchange for him.

I find there must occur some delay in the getting out of "Oft in the still night," on account of Powers' differences with his brother. Isabella's song is not published, there were only those two copies taken, which I hope she secured safely.

Will you have the goodness to procure for me the Bill of Mr. Derby, the Tailor, who made some things for me? He at present enjoys the distinction of being the only person in Derbyshire to whom I owe any money.

Best regards to all.

Ever your very attached and obliged friend,

Thomas Moore.

Bessy sends her best remembrances.

### III.

The poet's little daughter, Anne Jane Barbara, died on September 18th. Several of his published letters refer to the great grief of the parents, particularly of the mother, at this loss. Her death was the result of a fall that happened during Moore's absence in Paris. He

returned to Hornsey on August 20th, and Mr. Strutt seems to have been the first of his friends to whom he wrote about their trouble. His reference to the extraordinarily rapid sale of "*Lalla Rookh*" and the introductory sentence to Byron's laudatory greeting make this letter of special value.

Hornsey, Sep. 1, 1817.

*My dear Sir,*—I should have answered your kind letter (which I found upon my return from Paris ten days ago) immediately but for the anxious state my mind has been in about our poor Barbara, who has been and still continues most seriously ill from a fall she had downstairs during my absence. Indeed, I have sometimes despaired of her, but I trust now the worst is over—and though her recovery must be slow I begin to hope she is out of danger. Bessy is wonderfully well considering that now for more than a month she has not had scarcely an hour of undisturbed sleep—being day and night at the call of the dear child, she will not let any one else touch her.

My visit to Paris was very delightful, but this was a sad blow for me on my return. Our delight at the accounts we hear of your dear Caroline's recovery is the warmer, I believe, from what we feel about our own poor child! May she be long spared to you! I am glad you are so pleased with "*Lalla Rookh*," and right glad that the world seems so pleased with her. The third Edition was three thousand, and you see a Fourth is out already—nay, they tell me a Fifth will be wanted this week.

Lord Byron has finished a fourth Canto of "*Childe Harold*." I have just had a letter from him, and as I am not in a mood to amuse you myself, I shall transcribe for you some lines he has sent me, which I think you'll like. They are thus introduced in his letter:—

"Do you remember that damn'd supper of Rancilife's which ought to have been a dinner?—'Ah Master Shallow, we have heard the chimes at midnight.' But

My Boat is on the shore,  
And my Bark is on the sea.

But before I go, Tom Moore,  
Here's a double health to thee!

Here's a sigh to those who love me,  
And a smile to those who hate,  
And, whatever sky's above me,  
Here's a heart for every fate.

Though the ocean roar around me,  
Yet it still shall bear me on;  
Though a desert should surround me,  
It hath springs that may be won.

Wer't the last drop in the well,  
As I gasp'd upon the brink,  
Ere my fainting spirit fell,  
'Tis to thee that I would drink.

With that water as this wine  
The libation I would pour  
Should be peace with thine and mine,  
And a health to thee, Tom Moore."

I have never heard a word from Jeffrey about either my first manuscript or the other, and until I see what he does with "Lalla Rookh," I do not like to write to him. The continuation of the article in the *Edinburgh Magazine* is most splendid and laudatory.—Love to all around you from Yours and theirs ever  
*Thomas Moore.*

#### IV.

In November, 1817, Moore removed to a cottage at Sloperton, Wiltshire, in order to be near Lord Lansdowne. Very soon after his arrival there (the letter is not dated) the poet wrote to Joseph Strutt, describing his change of abode, and pleading it as a reason for not accepting a cordial invitation to visit them in Derbyshire. The most remarkable part of this letter is the postscript, which reveals a striking incident, hitherto unknown, illustrative of the poet's supreme contempt for the Prince Regent:—

Sloperton Cottage, Devizes, Wilts.  
*My dear Sir,*—Your letter did not

reach me so soon as a thing so very welcome ought, from Mr. Powers' having waited for the opportunity of a parcel he was sending me. If you had but put on it (what our friend Sir J. Stevenson writes on every letter he sends by the post) "this with speed," it would have been somewhat a more happy use of the injunction than his is. I have so often had occasion to thank you, my dear Sir, for kindnesses, that it puzzles even a poet's vocabulary to vary the phrases of gratitude—but, indeed, and in honest prose I do thank you for the cordiality with which you sympathize in our very severe loss and the earnestness with which you offer us such an agreeable diversion to our thoughts as a visit to friends so very dear to us would be—but you see our fate is decided for the present. We have got a little thatched cottage within two miles of Lord Lansdowne (who has been very friendly in his exertions to bring us into his neighborhood) for which we pay 40 pounds a year furnished, and as yet, it promises to be the most comfortable dwelling we have had. I dare say we shall find it dreary enough through the winter, but then we must only console ourselves with thinking how pleasant it will be in the summer and that "cras mellior erit" which cheats us on for ever, and luckily cheats us. It will be some time though before either of us enjoys any thing as we used to do. It is the first visit death has paid among those very dear to me, and it has left a desolate feeling behind it and a want of confidence in the blessings that still remain, which is very dreary indeed.

I have heard nothing from Jeffrey, but I understand "Lalla Rookh" is to be the leading article in the next number—as the bolt therefore is shot, I feel myself free to write to him, and shall in the course of a few days—when I shall not forget to reclaim the precious MS. which he so unwarrantably withholds from me.

Though your dear Caroline is so well, I wish she would take it into her head that Bath or the neighborhood of it would make her still better, as I then might have some chance of receiving

you for a day or two under my thatch. How I long to see her "strong babe of Paradise"!

Love to all from Bessy and

Yours very faithfully,

Thomas Moore.

I must tell you a little triumph I have had. Wilkie & Murray are about to publish an Edition of Sheridan's Works complete, and they applied to me to write a poem on his Life and Graces to be prefixed, at the same time, sending me the first proof-sheet as a specimen of the typography. This proof-sheet was no less than a Dedication from the Publishers to the Prince Regent, in pursuance, as they expressed thereto, of Sheridan's own wish. I instantly said I could have nothing to do with the undertaking, as such a Life as I should write of Sheridan could not possibly be placed beside a Dedication to the P. R.—in consequence of which, after a little deliberation, they sacrificed his R. H. to me, and I am to write the Essay, for which they give me 500*l.* about 3*l.* a page. This (I mean about the dedication) is *entre nous*.

#### V. AND VI.

The fifth and sixth of his extant letters to Mr. Strutt were written in the following year just after his triumphant reception at Dublin. Denon, mentioned in the fifth letter, would be Baron Dominique Vincent Denon, the French artist (1747-1825), who accompanied Bonaparte to Egypt. Joseph Strutt had an exceptionally fine collection of pictures and drawings.

Sloperton, Devizes, June 18th, 1818.

*My dear Sir*,—Just returned. full of honors (of the best kind, because won by independence) from that land of kindness and patriotism, poor Ireland. You cannot conceive anything much more enthusiastic than my reception there—and they were even planning, when I came away, a deputation to invite me to stand for the City of Dublin—but I have not time now to tell you more than that I was not forgetful of

you and yours in the midst of all my intoxicating glories. I procured for you a most cordial letter to Denon from Lady Morgan and you shall have it as soon as the portmanteau that contains it reaches me—but (by one of those travelling accidents that happens oftener to me than any one else) my portmanteau has been carried off to town by one of my fellow-passengers in the medley instead of his own, which remains in my hands as my only pledge or hope for the recovery of the other. Luckily, both our names are, on brass plates, upon our respective portmantous, and I should hope, in a day or two, I may have some account of my leather vagabond. It contains, I am sorry to say, a MS. copy of Mrs. H. which her friends begged me to look over, in order to decide for them the propriety of publishing it.

Pray, let me hear from you immediately how soon you think of setting off, and, with warmest remembrances to the dear girls and Miss Lee, believe me

Ever faithfully yours,

Thomas Moore.

I have just heard that my portmanteau is safe.

Sloperton, Devizes, Wednesday, June 24, 1818.

*My dear Sir*,—In reply to your very kind letter (whose cordiality was as welcome to me as any of my Irish glories) I have but just time to enclose Lady Morgan's letter—you will see whatever weight my name may have is thrown in too, and I wish most heartily it may be the means of procuring you some amusement.

I have just received a newspaper from Ireland, with a Poem to me in it, which you ought to see, full of the warmest, saddest and deepest Irish feeling—but I have not time to copy it out.—Yours ever faithfully,

Thomas Moore.

Bessy is not very well, but joins me vigorously in love and kind wishes to you all.

#### VII.

As early as 1803 Tom Moore received the modest appointment of Admiralty

Registrar at Bermuda, where he resided for some months; but finding the work uncongenial, he left, but was allowed to appoint a deputy. Just at the height of his fame and success, Moore incurred the serious liability of 6,000*l.* to the Admiralty through the defalcation of his deputy at Bermuda. In 1819 he took refuge from arrest in Paris, whence he accompanied Lord John Russell on a tour to Italy. Eventually he was relieved from debt and exile by Lord Lansdowne, but, with his honorable independence, insisted on discharging the whole of his indebtedness so soon as he had earned the amount from his publishers. The following letter from Samuel Rogers to Joseph Strutt speaks for itself on this matter:—

Amphill, September 17th, 1819.

*Dear Sir*,—Mr. Moore is, I believe now liable to be called upon for about 4,000*l.* Another 1,000*l.* will, I believe, complete the sum for which he can be made liable. It is indeed a terrible  
The Athenaeum.

misfortune but his spirits are not in the least dejected by it, and he is now at Paris on his way to Italy. Whether he will ever listen to the scheme of a subscription, which I think is very unlikely—it is certainly very undesirable to start such an idea at present, before a compromise is concluded with his Creditors. They have already risen in their demands, in consequence of the genial feeling expressed in his favor. But your kindness will not be lost upon him, whatever be the result. He often mentions you and your family and in the manner in which you would like best to be remembered—and I will take care that he shall not lose the pleasure which such a testimony from such a quarter will give him.

Mrs. Moore with her two children is living in a cottage near Devizes.

Believe me, my dear Sir, when I say, that I shall always think with pleasure of our early acquaintance and feel happy in any opportunity of renewing it.

Yours very sincerely,

*Samuel Rogers.*

[Franked by G. W. Russell.]

*J. Charles Cox.*

## THE TWO ENGLANDS.

Probably nineteen out of every twenty foreigners visiting this country form their impressions of its appearance and climate from the landscape of the South. Nearly all the sayings quoted in reference to English scenery apply mainly or entirely to the South. The well-known and true remark that in rural England you always seem to be coming to a great woodland, yet never reach it, refers to the endless series and lines of hedgerow elms and other timber. It would not be true of the North, or only of parts of it. Nearly all our great landscape painters painted the South, and the South almost entirely, except Turner. The famous set pieces which every one knows, and which the English public regards almost as portraiture of ancestral fields, parks, woods,

and rivers, deal with the smiling lands of the Home Counties and East Anglia, or the South and Western shires. A few Scotch painters have devoted their art to the Highland mountains. But that is a class of scenery not only geographically, but in sentiment, entirely detached from rural England, either North or South. There is all the difference in the world between the great masses of the Pennines, or the "tors" of Dartmoor, and the stern and wild summits of the Gramplians.

English feeling for, and appreciation of, beautiful country scenery, when seen in large, as in the pictures of Vicat Cole, or Leader, or Yeend King (in his larger pieces), all three of these painters being very faithful and rather literal transcribers of Nature, is mainly

limited to the rich and smiling South. Constable's most famous landscapes, such as those showing the lock on the Stour; or Dedham, or Salisbury; Crome's Norfolk heaths, Gainsborough's Suffolk parks, Sidney Cooper's Sussex marshes and sleek Southern cattle, Brett's translucent Cornwall seas and lichen-weathered rocks, the Surrey combes and cottages of Birket Foster or Mrs. Allingham, are inspired by the same motive. Nearly all the accepted and traditional forms of the picturesque in old barns, granaries, pigeon-houses, cottages, and in scenes of ploughing, sowing, reaping, and harvesting in pictorial art, are Southern. The types are never seen in the North. Even the horses, harness, cattle, and in old pictures the costumes, are different.

But the general public has only seen the one: it does not know the others. When it wants a change it jumps in imagination over the North, and over the Lowlands of Scotland, and sets itself to see Nature and scenery eye to eye with Landseer in the Highlands. In regard to the knowledge, no less than the appreciation, of the excellent differences of real North Country scenery, as well as that further South, it may be remembered that the whole mass of ordinary book illustration, and of the landscape backgrounds of figure scenes in periodicals and stories, old and new, is Southern. You never see a North Country stile, or barn, or stone wall, or river-bank, or one of the unmistakable hanging woods of Westmorland or the other Northern counties, or a "bank" in its Northern sense, or a "beck," or any of the familiar features, large or small, of landscape on either side of the great Pennine Range. Needless to say, nearly all descriptive English poetry and prose—Shakespeare's, Milton's, that of the lyric poets—draws upon Southern landscape.

The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-bullt shed

is Southern. There is no thatch in the North. All the other scenery in Gray's "Elegy," which is absolutely typical of English feeling about rural England, is the same. Tennyson's "Northern Farmer" is an exception; but nearly every line which he ever wrote referring to landscape is intensely Southern. His "Homes of Ancient Peace" breathes the very spirit and essence of the rich shires, where the ancient and smiling meadows encircle the house, and the sounds heard from the window are—

The moan of doves in immemorial elms  
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

His sea, if it is not by the strand and crags of Cornwall where Arthur fought his last dim battle in the West, is the shallow sea of the coast of his native shire. FitzGerald, when Tennyson came to London, lamented that he should now never more hear in his verse "the long roll of the Lincolnshire wave which reverberates in the measure of 'Locksley Hall.'"

That there are really two Englands, the North and the South, must strike every one who makes at all a lengthened or repeated stay in the former. Miss Ellen Thorneycroft Fowler would give us a third,—the Midlands. But such beautiful regions as the Vale of Evesham do not seem other than a portion of the South. The Northern England, with its distinctive scenery, absolutely different climate, greater range of vertical migration and habitation, and vastly more independent and vigorous life, may be taken roughly to mean the ground extending from the Border southwards, so far as is covered by the Pennines, by their spurs, and by the river-systems which descend from them. From this must be deducted the Peak and the Derbyshire districts, but the isolated mass of the "Lake" mountains must be added. In this great area you



are almost never out of sight of a mountain, or a mountain-like moor. The air is the air of the hills; the snow lies on the fell-tops in all men's sight till the middle of April, whenever a cold wind blows and showers fall. Instead of hedges and hedgerow timber, the country shows dry stone walls, stone houses, stone cottages, stone "stiles," stone barns, sheds, and byres. It is a land of great distances, wide mountain pastures; of blustering winds, rushing streams, and rolling moors of heather; of the ash, the rowan, the sycamore, and the wild cherry; and, above all, it is a land of "elbow-room." In its larger aspects it has never been painted. It is said not to be paintable. In its smaller features, and the incidents of the rustic life of its sturdy people, it is illustrated with marvellous fidelity in the vignettes of Bewick. Bewick knew the Northern of the two Englands well, and loved it passionately. "I would rather be herding sheep on Mickley Bank Top," he said, "than possess all the wealth of London."

Of the two Englands, the Northern is what it is mainly, and almost entirely, in virtue of its vast areas of mountain and moors, which differ from all the hills of the South (except the moorlands of the West) in that their basis is hard rock, whether millstone grit, or limestone, or granite, or old red sandstone, as in Cumberland, where the scars and cliffs of the Eden Valley are as red as any in Devon. The area either covered by, or influenced by, the mountains and the moors is very large. In themselves they form vast reserves, where man never leaves a trace, and where his sole business is the occasional herding of sheep, or the still less frequent shooting of grouse. So every man at will can "go up into the wilderness," for pleasure if he wishes it; and can find a wilderness of all altitudes, forms, and dimensions. In Yorkshire it will be full of juts of silver-gray

limestone, and gray "scars," or precipices, where the bones of the hill come through the thin covering of soil. On the fells he will find jutting walls of granite or slate, and on the lower summits of all the rolling waves of heather. For one river or brook in the South he will find the head-waters of a score in these hills, leaping, trickling, burrowing in the peat, or cutting out the faces of the rocks, with waterfalls ever growing wider and leaping further, into rock-basins ever expanding, until they reach the high valleys, and race down them to the Tees or the Tyne, the Eden, the Lune, the Ribble, or the Swale, up which the salmon run to their head-waters, the messengers between the mountains and the sea. Yet it must not be supposed, because the mountains and fells are treeless and their summits bare and alone, that there are no sweet nooks of earth in the North, and no smiling farms and warm sequestered dells. These are in the valleys, nestling under some "bank" or high bracken-crested, fir-topped fringe of moor, with the river sparkling at its foot, a myriad of flowers growing in its crevices, birds by the hundred dwelling in its sheltered hollows, and on its sunlit meadows innumerable lambs. The garden, safely walled, is bright with flowers, and fertile in the kindly fruits of the earth, and all around are cattle and ponies and the independent sheep and poultry of the North. Of farmyard in the Southern sense there is none, for there is no corn except a little oats, the straw of which is used as fodder, no stacks, no strawyard, and no fattening beeves. The whole land is one for pasture, for sheep, for grazing cattle, and for dairies; and the farmer's most useful servants are his dogs, to which even the horses play a secondary part.

The men of further England are a different race by long prescription, and by the effect of natural forces. As a

rule they are not cultivators, but shepherds, and breeders and feeders of cattle. They do not toil in the fields for a weekly wage, and have not done so for centuries. The older men hire farms, small or large, to bring up their cattle upon. The younger men, and women also, engage themselves as "helps" to the others, and live in their houses and share their meals on equal

*The Spectator.*

terms. There are almost no poor; and though many are rich, the daily life of the rich and of the small tenants or yeomen differs but little either from that led to-day, or from the substantial but homely conditions of two centuries ago. They are free, healthy, courteous, and, so far as can be seen, quietly and thoroughly happy.

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### THE AGREEMENT WITH FRANCE.

The agreement with France has caused general satisfaction, and a satisfaction that is very right and proper. We are not surprised, indeed, that there has been some outcry from a certain quarter of the Tory Press against the details. If this arrangement had been the work of a Liberal Government we should have heard a good deal about Little Englanders and men whom the nation cannot trust and statesmen who forget that they are the Ministers of this country and not of some foreign country. We shall not be suspected of any intention of playing that rôle in commenting on the transaction of which the details were made public this week. We think the reasons for welcoming this event are infinitely more important than the reasons for regarding it, viewed as an ordinary diplomatic bargain, as a doubtful achievement. But we do not think anything is gained by refusing to look facts in the face or by shirking the moral. If newspapers like the *Morning Post* are angry, they are angry because a British Imperialist Government would not have agreed five years ago to the terms it has accepted to-day. But though they are perfectly honest and consistent in their complaint, they are unreasonable, for they forget that our position to-day is not the position

we occupied five years ago, and that a nation cannot pursue such an adventure as the South African war without depreciating its moral and diplomatic credit. Certainly we have paid a higher price to-day for the settlement of these questions than we should have paid before the war. Five years ago it was generally believed that any action taken by France against the Fighig group of oases would have led to war. These oases are in the extreme south-east of Morocco—a thorn in the side of the French—a debatable land from which Razzias were constantly interrupting the communications of the French with the South. The South African war released France from the restraints to which she had been obliged to submit. That is merely one illustration of the change in our position effected by the war.

In West Africa we have given France some substantial concessions. The Los Islands contain two good harbors that can be made into the best coaling station on the West African coast. These harbors now go to France, who had no good coaling station between the West Coast of France and Madagascar. The strength of our position in Gambia consisted in this, that the navigable water by which a French colony was entered was entirely in our hands. The trade

of that French colony had to pass through our territory. We have ceded Yarbutenda, the port at the head of this navigable water, and French commerce can now go direct to French territory without passing through an English zone. In Siam, again, the attempt to cut off the French approach to the Mekong by a neutral zone is abandoned. These are all of them important concessions, and of course if an Imperialist wanted to give nothing and to maintain the position we occupied before the war, he is likely to grumble; but he must remember amid his grumbles that the war he clamored for has altered the diplomatic situation.

For our part we think frankly that the advantage of getting rid of all the floating difficulties that were liable to disturb our peace from time to time infinitely transcends any incidental losses of this bargain, and far from blaming the Government we congratulate them most cordially. Whether Lord Lansdowne could have done better under existing circumstances we do not know. If he could have gained perpetual Free Trade, instead of Free Trade for thirty years, in Morocco, or some concession in Madagascar by asking for less in Egypt, we think he would have been wiser to jettison some of his Egyptian demands. But we entirely demur to the view that we ought to wince and smart over every acquisition of France, even if that acquisition costs us nothing. It is to the good and not to the harm of mankind that the great colonizing work in which France is engaged in North-West Africa should be hampered as little as possible, and what is an advantage to mankind is *pro tanto* an advantage to us. This agreement liberates the energies of France for the undistracted prosecution of a great scheme of enlightened and humane colonization, and for that we rejoice. It is, further, a genuine re-

lief to be rid of the difficulty in Newfoundland, and those of us who have felt most uncomfortable about the diplomatic irregularity of our position in Egypt must be sincerely thankful that France has commuted her right of protest. On the morrow of this event came the annual report on Egypt, which shows once again how steady is her progress under the rule of an official who clings to the best traditions of British administration. We believe that if the bargain were as unequal as the most pessimistic critics believe, it would still be a most substantial gain to our country to have made it.

Already, indeed, we are witnessing some of the good effects that have followed our closer relations with France. Two or three years ago it was the commonplace of Imperialism that the Latin countries were decadent, that our best friend was Germany, and that France was ceasing to be a nation of importance or of character. So strong was this impression that the Imperialists who blamed the French most violently for the Parisian caricatures during the early months of the war viewed the excesses of the German Press in the most indulgent and forgiving temper. Some papers talked of an inevitable war; others arranged for the distribution of the French colonies, and the *Spectator* talked of offering Germany the whole of North Africa as the price of her help against France, if France should attack us. It is a real gain to have emerged from this disagreeable and mischievous atmosphere, and though the motives that have inspired a *rapprochement* to France are not everywhere of the highest—they are in some cases closely connected with pique and chagrin—the fact remains that a vicious state of rancor and suspicion has disappeared. What all the great Liberals of the last century hoped to see, a real mutual sympathy and understanding between the

two great nations which, as Mr. Morley once said, "have together surpassed all the nations in the world in what they have done for human freedom and enlightenment," may still be a distant dream. But, at any rate, we have removed a series of problems that might at any moment have become an active cause of quarrel, and that is in itself a great and memorable achievement.

What will be the effects of these transactions? They will, we hope, help to acclimatize the notion of arbitration and civilized intercourse. Possibly this event may help to remind some of our reckless politicians and journalists that it is no real service to your country to abuse and insult every nation with which for the moment you feel out of sympathy. That this lesson still needs

*The Speaker.*

to be learned, may be seen from the language used about Russia, in the chief of the offenders in those old days, when it was the fashion to discover in the French national character everything that was mean and odious and hostile to England. If this arrangement is seconded by the right spirit in diplomacy and discussion it ought to help towards improving our relations with Russia. Thirdly, it ought to have its effect on the armaments of both countries, and therefore of Europe. Fourthly, it ought to make the influence of the two nations a real power in the near East. If it promotes in any degree those great causes, the French and British Governments may congratulate themselves on an achievement worthy of the leadership the two nations have held in Europe.

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## BOOKS AND AUTHORS.

"The Yeoman" of Charles Kennett Burrow's latest novel is a striking figure. Poor, widowed, and sonless, he keeps up the struggle in behalf of the land dearer to him than wife or child with a doggedness which the return and re-establishment of a successful cousin from the colonies embitters to envy and hate. The daughter who loyally shares his lot is of a temperament that adapts itself more easily to new conditions, and the relations between the young people in the rival households add a touch of romance to the story. But it is the central figure—gloomy and tragic as it is—which gives the book its strongest hold on the reader's interest. As a study of morbid mental growths it is likely to attract attention. John Lane.

Green Mountain scenery forms the background for M. E. Waller's striking

study, "The Woodcarver of 'Lympus," and its hero is an ambitious young fellow of vigor and capacity, hopelessly crippled by the fall of a tree, and condemned to a futile and embittered existence on a lonely hill farm. The softening influence of the homely family life of which his misfortune makes him the centre; the widening of interest that comes through the friendship of a passing tourist; the discovery of his artistic talent with the means of independence which it brings, and the response of his nature to the complex appeal of art, love and faith—all are described with unusual richness and delicacy of detail. The story is of the type in which sentiment rather than realism predominates, and the social and individual problems which its plot introduces are discussed from the ideal as well as the practical standpoint. Little, Brown & Co.

## THE CURTAIN OF DREAMS.

The painted Curtain of Dreams is torn,  
The Bird of Love is dead,  
The Lute of Joy is broken in twain  
And the spirit of Youth is fled.

What use to mend the Curtain of  
Dreams

If the spirit of Youth be fled?  
What use to mend the Lute of Joy  
When the Bird of Love is dead?

Let Fate bring roses or come with rue,  
But come ere Love be dead,  
For Joy and Sorrow alike are gray  
When the Spirit of Youth is fled.

*Ethel Clifford.*

## PHILHELLENE.

Grant me all the store of knowledge,  
grant me all the wealth that is,  
Swiftly, surely, I would answer, Give  
me rather, give me this:

Bear me back across the ages to the  
years that are no more,  
Give me one sweet month of spring-  
time on the old Saronic shore;

Not as one who marvels mournful, see-  
ing with a sad desire  
Shattered temples, crumbling columns,  
ashes of a holy fire;

But a man with men Hellenic doing  
that which there was done,  
There among the sons of Athens, not  
a stranger but a son.

There the blue sea gave them greeting  
when their triremes' conquering  
files

Swam superb with rhythmic oarage  
through the multitude of isles.

There they met with Mede and brake  
him, beat him to his slavish East;  
Who was he, a guest unwished-for  
bursting on their freeman's feast?

There the ancient celebration to the  
maiden queen of fight  
Led the long august procession upward  
to the pillared height.

Man with man they met together in a  
kindly life and free,  
And their gods were near about them  
in the sunlight or the sea.

There the light of hidden Wisdom  
sprang to their compelling quest;  
Ray by ray the dawn from Hellas rose  
upon the wakening West.

Every thought of all their thinking  
swayed the world for good or ill,  
Every pulse of all their lifeblood beats  
across the ages still.

*Ernest Myers.*

## THE CHILD ALONE.

They say the night has fallen chill—  
But I know naught of mist or rain.  
Only of two small hands that still  
Beat on the darkness all in vain.

They say the wind blows high and wild  
Down the long valleys to the sea;  
But I can only hear the child  
Who weeps in darkness, wanting me.

Beyond the footfalls in the street,  
Above the voices of the bay,  
I hear the sound of little feet,  
Two little stumbling feet astray.

Oh, loud the autumn wind makes moan,  
The desolate wind about my door,  
And a little child goes all alone  
Who never was alone before.

*Rosamund Marriott Watson.*

## THISTLE-DOWN.

Drifting by  
Across the sky  
Whence?—wither?—why?  
Perhaps to pillow a queen's rest,  
Perhaps to soften a bird's nest,  
Perhaps to rot:  
Helpless things,  
I know not.  
Yet they have wings.

*R. C. K. Ensor.*